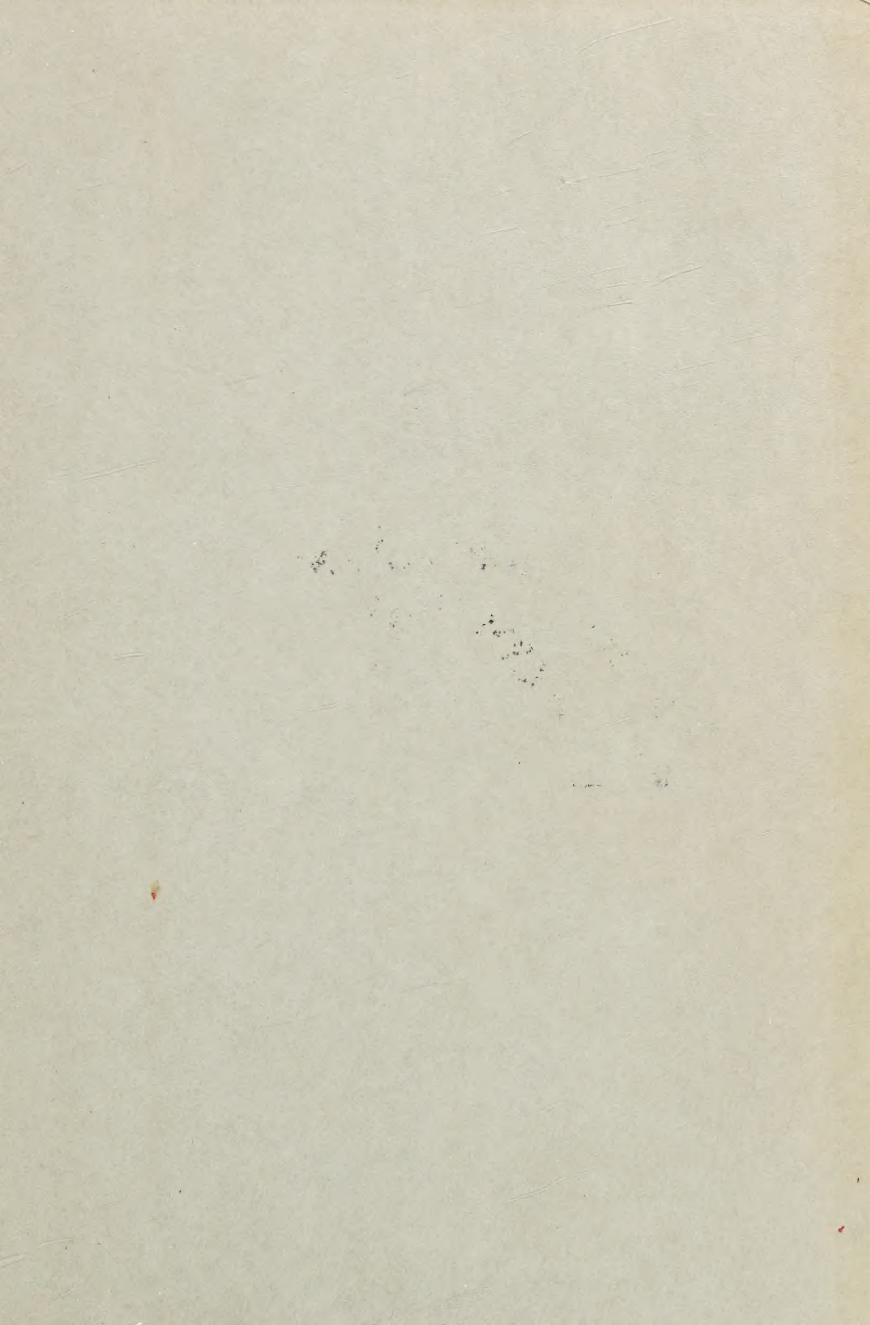




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JUST TALKS ON COMMON THEMES

BY
ARTHUR G. STAPLES



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A. G. Staples

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PREFACE

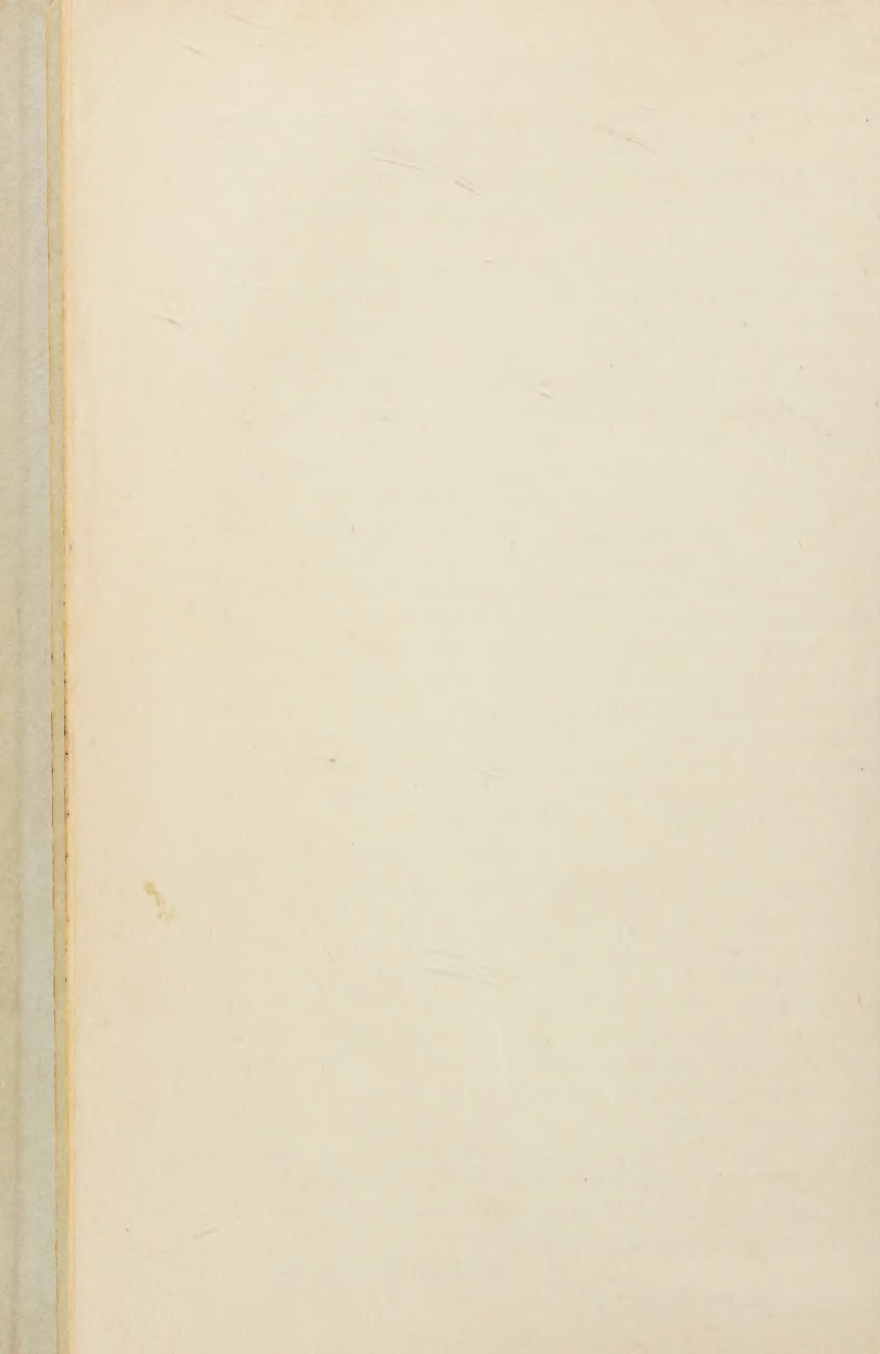
This book is a selection from articles appearing each day in the columns of the Lewiston Evening Journal, a newspaper published in Lewiston-Auburn, Maine. This accounts for the many local allusions and Maine colloquialisms.

No apology is needed for the publication of this book—or if such apology be required, it should not come from the writer. One hundred readers (more or less) contend for the distinction of being the first to suggest that these familiar essays be put in a book. Left later, to the discrimination of the same public, one thousand readers professed by letter a desire to have copies of this book when published. Whether they will regret it, is a matter for the future to determine; but it leaves the publishers comfortable, since they have no critics to appease and no large market to seek.

It will be seen that many of the sketches are autobiographical. Autobiography is always a matter of taste. It is true that there is little of interest in common lives; yet, there is value in the sum total of human experience. For instance, a certain man who lived a quiet life once wrote two books. One of them was to be his monument; in it he “solved” all the problems of life. In the other book were told the simple annals of his own life. The former book is forgotten—out of print; the latter is read by thousands, daily. The world may thus find something of interest in any commonplace life—especially if it be told with fidelity to truth. It is the fond belief of the writer that if there is any virtue in any portion of this book, it lies in the fact that these sketches were written out of a feeling of intimacy with his public, in a purely spontaneous enjoyment of the themes, and in belief in their truth.

One word more, the material for many of these sketches came from many sources, to all of which thanks are due without further notice. It is hoped that the book will do no harm and there is a faint hope in the miraculous—that it may get a smile, or a tear or a second thought in a busy world.

Arthur G. Staples.



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JUST TALKS
ON COMMON THEMES

ON "LET'S GO FISHING"



LET'S GO a-fishing.

I did not say that first.

The birds said it; the green grass said it; the bud on the tree said it; the wind soft in your face with a thin odor of the fields, said it; the spring rain on the roof said it, or rather sang it, as you have heard it before on some night when you lay before the open fire in camp and heard the high-powered gales blow off the big lake and the branches of the trees softly brushing the roof overhead.

No man who loves to go fishing can be wholly bad. He cannot, in the reason of things, get near to Nature and fail to look up to the hills and contemplate his own place in the immensity of creation—dependent, transitory, a mystery among mysteries—and feel that there is a God. The wind! What a strange thing it is! The sky! How strange and awesome a roof! The waters! How stirred with music against the beaches! The blue hills, how beautiful! The rain-clouds and the sun, so full of glory! Is there any man who sits back in his boat and fishes, not feeling that he is an almoner of God? Is there any man who does not know that the town and his small belongings therein, be they millions, are very trifling by the side of the Power that put the color in the lake-side grasses, that tinted the spring leaflets on the willows and made the very fish that he is seeking with his lure, so lithe and beautiful!

You and I have a right to go fishing. We have it just because it is a part of the religion of the out-of-doors. Not even the Hun has a right to forbid it. It is a thing—this right—that we will fight for if need be. It is a right because it is symbolic of peace and freedom. It is a right because it teaches men to be

kind and good. It is a right because it softens and betters manhood. It is a right because we love it so.

The same with all Nature. We owe her all that we owe motherhood. Out of her being came we—back to her bosom we return. To her side we should go as often as we can. It is not fishing exactly—not the struggle, the patient game, the lure and the strike and the prey that I mean by fishing. It is the prospect, the preparation, the journey, the first sight of wild country, the clean odor of the forest, the distant vistas, the first glimpse of the blue, rippling waters of the lakes. What a thrill. How the true fisherman's heart leaps! What ecstasy as he sits him down for the first time each year by the rusty old camp-nook and ingle. What memories. What forgotten faces. What dear friends of long ago whose faces shine out of the dusky corners of the old camp! Gone! Not—if we fishermen know it. Such sacred friendships were never born to be buried in oblivion. No! They were created to be renewed beyond the purple peaks remote, in new domains where lakes beneficent will wait for anglers, yet.

Let's go fishing.

We shall come back renewed. It will be like going to "blighty" out of the trenches. We shall be the better for it when we return.

Let's go fishing.

ON "BEING A MARTIAL-FIGGER"



YOU rarely see an old chap like me or a sawed-off chap (one of the deferred-growth class) who has not a very strong martial instinct. They are certainly a warlike lot. And always were.

I used to march, in Masonic parades—or at least I did once. It was in Skowhegan. I have told the story once or twice to listening throngs and most of the throng have been very patriotic, for quite a spell thereafter. If I could get it into a four-minute speech, I think it would sell bonds for liberty.

When we marched in Skowhegan we had a short hike—only about thirty miles or so—on a medium warm day, say about 132 degrees in the shade. We were in light marching order—two luncheons, one dinner, three collations and the contents of four lemonade barrels in each man. Being a Sir Knight, I wore a chapeau several sizes too large with a tendency to slip around sidewise and present a front view like Geo. Washington crossing the Delaware. Looked at from any angle, with the plume on the starboard side and the knightly emblem of the cross, on the port, I was a natty sight. I also wore a man-size sword, which hung from a belt that was made for a large person—the outfit being borrowed. The sword hung down, therefore, in a sort of discouraged and depressed way, and the belt not having the proper friction against my abdomen (and I not having any abdomen) it likewise slipped around in sympathy with my chapeau and got between my legs—so that really it was hard to tell sometimes which way I was marching—hard for me—harder for the Eminent Commander who as much as said that I was no ornament to the parade. I wanted to be military and Knightly and I tried to be, but it was impossible, with only two hands, to keep my hat with the

pointed end in front and my sword at my side. I kept both hands going and both legs going; and that was all any one Sir Knight could be expected to do.

I was in the rear rank. There were four of us, in the rear rank. Two Sir Knights, a boy on a bicycle and a man selling hot Frankfurts. It was very dusty. After we passed the fifteenth milepost, the bicycle got a hot-box and fell out. On the twentieth mile, the frankfurts began to explode with the heat and one of them struck my companion on the baldric and he fell out. After that I brought up in the rear all alone. I never saw it dustier. I hustled along working hands and feet just as fast as lightning—now straightening my hat and now pulling my sword out of my shoes and leaping over it, anon—I will repeat that word anon—doing my best. The head of the parade was ahead of me—that much I knew. Occasionally, I heard the far-off music of a band. Now and then I saw the form of a comrade, his plume nodding in the dust. And then, weary of adjusting my hat, I let it slide where it would over my nose and walked on, now in the darkness, now in the light, as the chapeau slid.

Along about six o'clock in the evening—as it seemed to me, I met a man and asked him if he had seen a Masonic parade. He said he understood it was yesterday. I told him that I thought he was mistaken and would he inquire, because I surely started today and if I had been walking all night, I wanted to know it. He said he would and he did, and returning, said that I was right. It was still today, not yesterday. He brought a kind woman along and she said she had seen the parade, but that they all wore their hats different. My sword then suddenly became tangled in my legs as I endeavored to assume a military appearance and I stumbled visibly as I passed on my way in the parade, leaving the man and woman behind.

I caught up with my command at the twenty-ninth

mile by getting a ride on a grocery cart—the boy driving frantically. I fell in gracefully. Falling in or over was the best thing I did. I was received with enthusiasm. My appearance was surely chic. I was carrying my sword on my shoulder. That is all I remember until we were dressing up on the right in front of the Skowhegan Town Hall and the band was playing “Onward, Christian Soldiers.”

That night we had a dance in the Skowhegan Town Hall and the next day we marched all day between Waterville and Fairfield, most of the time encircling graveyards. Since then I have not marched. Today, I sit in my slippered years, thinking of my experiences in the battle line. And I recall that it is not always given to the tallest to be the bravest, nor to giants to be the best judges of pace. Some day, in the wisdom of a progressive age, they will turn the lines about; put the short men in front and the tall men in the rear to march in the dust or above the dust as God wills. If that be so, I know one thing, that we of the erstwhile rear rank, attired as I was in Skowhegan approaching on friend or foe, either freeze the marrow in the bones of the latter or revive the drooping spirits of that friendly city under whose peaceful elms, we march as “martial figgers.”

ON "A TOAST TO THE FLAG"



GIVE you today a Toast to the Flag of our Country—the Flag that has set the world free.

I give you this Flag, with all its history. The Flag of the first republic on earth, to make the People superior to the State and declare that all white men are free and equal under law. The first Flag to cleanse its folds from the stain of human slavery, in the blood of its heroes. The first Flag to sail the seas, free and unmolested. The first Flag to go journeying forth, across the prairies beyond the Mississippi; to ripple forth in glory from the lofty, snow-clad peaks of the Rockies and to blazon in the sunshine of the great North along the trail of Fremont and Clark. The first Flag to float over enfranchised Cuba and Hawaii, redeemed. The first Flag to greet the silent dawn in the interminable wastes of the North Pole.

I give you this Flag, with all its symbols. Its blue, as of the blood of heroes, living and dead, who loved it and defended it. Its blue, as of the sheen of the restless seas, that encompass and protect it. Its white, as of the clear day; the union of all of the colors of the spectrum; the peaks of her transcendent mountains and the drifting snows of her prairie wastes. Aye! White—clear thru. The Flag that reached the Heavens; plucked the field of azure and the field of gold for symbols and then set the American Eagle above it to watch, with tireless and searching eye, that the star be dimmed or desecrated.

I give you this Flag, with all its hopes and purposes, its Faith and Purpose. The bright Flag; the cheerful Flag; the undying, the courageous and the merciful Flag. The Flag, that rose triumphant from the smoke where the Lusitania went down. The Flag that

is protecting folds over the widowed, the fatherless and the homeless in stricken Belgium. The Flag that would not yield a single foot in the terrible storm of St. Mihiel, but ever advanced! The Flag that has limned the face of the pitying Christ, triumphant yet sorrowful in the work of Mercy where he wounded and the dying lay in long rows amid the athering shadows of the night. The Flag that the ttle children of the world love and do not fear. The Flag that spells a new-found liberty to the oppressed of ll lands. The Flag that has never touched the ground r been set beneath the feet of Tyrant Hun or Unpeakable Turk.

I give you, Americans, the world over—our Flag! The Flag of a Free People. The Flag of an undying Union of sovereign states joined together in the yet greater Sovereignty of a Nation. I give you this Flag, with its history, its achievement, its ideals! The Flag of the United States of America.

ON "MAKE YOUR WIFE A PARTNER"



LET US talk in a common and possibly practical way about using woman's brains and business acumen more commonly than is now being done.

Most wives are given no chance to show whether they have any business sagacity or not. If the wife asks her husband what is troubling him in his business he replies that if he told her she would not understand. He thinks he is the main-show and the side-shows thrown in. He probably never gives his wife a cent of money that she does not have to beg for and he has kept her so that she does not know the difference between a promissory note and a bank-

check. He says that she is extravagant. She says she has to grovel so for a cent, that she will be da if she won't be extravagant when she can get money. Thus many a marriage, otherwise h goes to the bad.

Women, who are actually doing independent cantile or industrial business, go bankrupt less quently, on the average, than do men. The found the Vanderbilt fortune was a woman. The fath the old Commodore Vanderbilt, Cornelius by name a poor business man. He lived by selling produ the people of the city of New York, then a comm of about 80,000. The family lived on Staten Is The old man Vanderbilt was a truck peddler and a farmer. And he failed at that. The farm went rupt under his supervision and was to be sold for

But it happened that the wife in that household financial ability. She had been allowed a small for housekeeping and had been able to invest a lit it in hens and she had kept books. So, when old derbilt came miauling around and saying that th home must be sold, Madame Vanderbilt said to him I don't know." And dragging down the family she dug into it and extracted \$3,000 in gold, of v her husband knew nothing. Out of this, the old was saved—just like the movies. When she die left \$50,000 in cash. It was she who started Cor in the way of making money, by advancing hin capital for his ferry that netted him \$1,000 the year and laid the foundation for his millions.

And yet there are a lot of pin-heads who th woman cannot possibly know how to do business proper way. They seem to think that God cor the brains in man. A man's wife should be his pa in a going concern, the business of keeping hous saving money reasonably. The rounders and the ers and the proselyters have very little in common

their wives and want less. They consider that what they earn is theirs and a part of what the wife earns is also theirs and then what they can borrow, both owe. The news-dispatches, the other day, relate that a man over in New Hampshire, shot his wife because supper wasn't ready. There is more excuse for that than there is for not giving a woman her share of the joint earnings of the firm of "Wife and I." In the case of the wife who did not get supper, she was a quitter on the job. She should not be killed—of course—but she ought to be fined her week's allowance.

So—since we are working for peace, comfort, beauty, joy, human betterments, we ought to make use of the vast amount of woman's brains, lying idle around the house. Give her a chance to show what she can do in running the finances of the family. Turn over to her a fair amount of cash per week and make her keep books on it. Let her have her own bank-account and draw her own checks and paddle her own financial canoe—yea, even let her buy her own hats and gowns and pay for them. She can do it if you divide fairly. I know a woman who runs her own house on a fair allowance for keeping her husband as a boarder and now she has so much money in the bank that he is borrowing it at fair rate of interest. It is a certainty, that if your wife has the business-skill as so many of them have—all unsuspected—you can turn in less money and have more at the end of a year than you would think possible—and live better, too.

Try it! Try it! It will end all your bickering over money.

ON "THE BUTTERFLY AND THE PIG"



THE BUTTERFLY meandered softly through the air and settled on the pig's off ear.

There you were—the utility and the beauty of life. The butterfly was all one with the day—yellow and gold, mingled with the emerald of leaves, blinking in amber sunlight.

The philosopher who was there looking over the top of the pen asked of the Bates Senior what he thought of the uses of each. The Senior thought that each was useful—to the limit.

We have a term for idle people—gay butterflies. We have a term for supremely selfish people—pigs. People to whom the terms are applied are a disgrace to the creatures for whom they are misnamed.

It is safe to say that the Lord knew what He was about when He made the butterfly so beautiful. He rather thinks He spread himself when He made a violet or painted a sky of deep azure in a June day. But I am not so sure that He had anything to do with it, when He made a man or woman who has developed into a vain, selfish, overdressed and extravagant dandy or fashionable. So, too, with the Pig in human form. A pig is a very useful animal. He is all right in his own way. So it is hard on the butterfly and hard on the pig, to make them bear the name of thinking-beasts who have merely imitated the super-characteristics of the butterfly and the pig and know nothing of their own aspirations to serve the world, in their humble way.

The mission of the butterfly is plainly to exemplify beauty while it is performing its functionary part in the natural system—maintaining some balance of nature. The philosophies mention three essentials—Good, the Beautiful and the True. One of the elements

for which the World war was fought is the beautiful. We went into it on this side of the Atlantic, at least, for "The beauty of the Lilies that were born across the sea." The beauty of ideals, the beauty of home and liberty—the world safe for Democracy and a Democracy safe for the world—a beautiful thing.

The human butterfly and the human pig are not doing much for this ideal. The human butterfly rides around in his limousine with a horde of servants to look after him; to dress him and to undress him; with every thought for himself, including evasion of duty and work.

The human pig keeps his nose in his profiteering trough and grunts whenever anyone asks him to stop feeding long enough to look at the world as it is. If you ask him to "give until it hurts" he says "No! Lemme alone. This feeding out of the trough is a matter of business with me." The earth may rock with thunder of the cannon, the sound of his eating may be punctuated with the groans of the dying and the sobbing of wives and mothers who have given their all—what's that to him? He is making money and hanging onto it. He will lift his nose and enjoy himself when the war is over. Poor thing—with bristles on him. He does not know that he will never be anything but a pig until he stops feeding. He does not stop to think that some day the heirs will cut him up into sparerib; smoke him for bacon and salt him down for pork. Their only eulogy upon him will be that he "cut up profitably."

Now if the pig—the human pig, I mean, will only look at the butterfly's beauty and, as it flies away from his off-ear, try to emulate the subtle suggestion of God's wonderful message of a spiritual life beyond the material; and if the human butterfly will look at the industrious pig eating away to the increase of the world's material welfare, and will emulate his industry,

we shall have that middle ground of human betterment which is the average of usefulness.

All of which is the purpose of this allegory of the butterfly that meandered to the pig's ear and alighted there and flew hence, like jewels in the sunshine.

ON "DOGS-IN-GENERAL"



HERE is a dog, over in my neighborhood in Auburn, which is a "dog-in-general." He will go with anyone. You glance at him as you pass by and give him any kind of encouragement and he gets up, with a purposeful air, and, waving his tail, trudges along with you.

There is something about him that one cannot help liking. His eye has a look like that of a small boy chasing a circus parade. His tail seems to be hung on ball bearings. He walks cross-legged, just to show you that he has accomplishments. He looks foolish and acts foolish, but he is a good dog in general.

Dogs, in general, are various. But a "dog-in-general" is a dog without a master. He is a tramp dog. He is like some people, no special attachments to any person or place, but a friend of every one. You see such people. They are what the French call "vaurien," good for nothing except that they are kind, loving and wistful and see far ahead, down the dusty road of life, strange things that they want to see and for which they are willing to trudge along with you to fare with you in all adventure. This dog that I know in our town has been across the Atlantic ocean six times in the big liner, chasing soldiers to the great war. Every time he saw a soldier in khaki, he got up and took his burden of travel and went along with him. He had a soul attuned to the mysteries of the unknown. He was not

built for the fireside, but for the big places of earth. He wanted to enlist but they did not take bull-terriers. If he had been a man he would have been "over there" in 1914.

I have seen these dogs-in-general that went around with nobody but boys. They had good masters who fed them and liked them but whom they would quit any time—especially on a roving summer afternoon, or some subtle day in June—to go with any boy. The more ragged the boy, the better the dog liked him! The dog would prefer to go along by the side of some meandering brook; to lie in the warm sunshine; to kick up his heels; to bury his face in the warm, sweet turf; to dig for the woodchuck; to chase sticks and stones thrown in the swimmin' hole—in short just a boy's dog—never a man's dog. Any human nature about such a dog? Anything in an "onery" dog to remind you of some folks you have known? That dog would never go to war. He would not be interested; but he would make a good boy-scout dog. Faithful—to boys! No name for his devotion. Did you ever see one of those big, good-natured chaps in your old-time country-town who always collected all of the boys? Nature-loving men who liked youth. Well—the boy-dog is a cousin of that chap.

I don't know as this amounts to anything—but I want to put in, as the moral to this dog's tale, a plea for leniency to the harmless person-in-general. There are many of them, whose chief weakness is inconstancy. If constancy be left out of a dog or a man, what are we going to do about it? They are wanderers—that's all. Drifting here, drifting there, doing nothing much, until some time as I once saw in the case of a dog-in-general, they leap into the sea to save a child, they spring into the breach to stop a flood, they come along when the house is burning and leap into the flames to rescue a life. And then away they go—seek-

ing new adventures, forgetting their own heroisms. Into this war at last have gone many of them. Wanderers who have been here and there over the face of the earth looking for the Great Adventure! They have found it—over there—in the trenches, brave, careless, happy-go-lucky souls face to the foe, eyes bright, lips wreathed in smiles—just as tho thru the veil that was rent by the searching bullet, they saw brighter and yet brighter dusty highways, stretching on and on forevermore, in which it was ever summer, with the birds a-caroling and the soft winds lifting the damp ringlets about their brows.

ON "THE SACRIFICE OF THE ROSE"



AM LEANING over the railing of the garden looking at the June rose. My neighbor who lost an arm in the Civil War, Spottsylvania, is there ahead of me and seems deep in thought. He is over seventy years old—but not so old as the rose-bush. "What do you think of it?" I ask. "I don't know," is the reply. "But God did not make it for nothing, neither the rose nor the briar. There's something behind it."

So here was a man who, almost sixty years ago, shed his brother-man's blood in war, standing silent in adoration of a June rose. Maybe, after all, it came very near to typifying some of the things for which he fought—peace in the garden for the rose to bloom, the dooryard to the plain man's home undisturbed, the trig wife in the doorway, the silence of the night in which the perfume of the flowers may pass and repass his pillow unmixed with poison gases.

"I wonder why," said I to the old soldier, "I wonder why God made the rose, if He made it for something

and not for nothing? Why did He bother to make beautiful things? Why did He not fill the world with meat and drink, iron and copper, lumber and brick, exclusively? Why did He not make mountains of dynamite and smokeless powder and have all His trees bear bayonets and rifles! Why did He make fields of green grass when He might have made them of cement so as to move great guns the more quickly, that other men might be blown to atoms the more expeditiously? We do not need buttercups and daisies! We do not require golden sunsets and the aurora. All that we require is the superman; the food for him and the weapons in his grasp."

"The meek shall inherit the earth," was the reply. And then he shouldered his cane and walked away.

And so I came back to thinking about the reasons for beauty and perfume and kindness. And I asked myself if the secret of the world is sacrifice. Out of this war, what big thing abides? Is it not sacrifice? Are we not all learning what it means to think of others and serve others? Does not Duty point its finger at you out of the storm of nations and speak to you saying, "Sacrifice." If the secret of the world is sacrifice (and by "secret of the world" I mean the secret of evolution spiritually and materially), then beauty takes its place and meekness does inherit. The story of birth is sacrifice and suffering. Travail is a part of all development. The plant itself gives of itself in reproduction and many of them die in so doing. The mother gives of her own life to the child. Have you read that majestic paragraph out of Charles Darwin, the summary of his theories on evolution and the survival of the fittest? The mossy bank that Darwin brings into his picture, is peopled with almost infinite variety of animal, vegetable, insect and other life. But every living organism is sacrificing to perpetuate its kind. It is building a world thru death for the world's sake.

If this be the plan, then every living organism has its place and man is among them—dying for the advancement of the world as a whole.

And who shall inherit? It is the meek, who, by giving here and there; who, by yielding to the necessities; who, by sacrifice and by rebirth, spiritually and materially shall perpetuate his kind. The first caveman fought. He was strong. He passed on—conquered by two cavemen who combined, each sacrificing something that the other might live. Tribe united with tribe and by concessions became strong. The state was born. And so on. But never was it the superman. It was ever the union of men and women each sacrificing, each working for others.

And it was for this that God made the rose and many other lovely emblems of beauty. He might have made a handsomer thing than the rose but probably did not see the need of it. It blooms just as fairly in the waste places as in the garden; just as lovely in the garden of the poor as in the garden of the rich. It gives itself a sacrifice to that ideal of beauty and of sweetness which is the type of Heaven on earth. We are going thru grievous times. But we must not lose hold of the eternal truth "that our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things that are not seen are eternal."

Back of the Rose is God's eternal edict of victory thru sacrifice. The meek shall inherit the earth.

ON "WOMEN'S BACK HAIR"



VE was the original Jane—with her golden hair a-hanging down her back. I have seen several pictures of Eve—surreptitiously—and she had lovely hair, always arranged with seeming carelessness but with as much regard for decency as was possible under the circumstances. I have always wondered what the photographers would have done in the Garden of Eden, if Eve had persisted in doing her hair up high.

A good many people still think that a woman's hair looks well, flowing down around her waist. But women seem to find it mussy and, as a rule, are inclined to differ with Eve as to coiffure. If you should look over any of the "Histories of Fashions" in the different ages, you would find a great many peculiar structural complications in head-dresses. And the more we look at them, the more we are inclined to believe that the simpler they are, the better.

It is no business of mine—of course—how women "do up" their back hair, so long as they do it up in the boudoir; but when they come to the office and keep doing it up all day, it wearies the flesh. Some of the girls nowadays peer out between their coiffure like a Spitz dog thru his matted locks. They have succeeded in training some of their hair to curl out around their ears and about six inches past their noses and it takes a good deal of time to keep it there. They have to stop between your impassioned declarations, "Your letter of the 15th inst. rec'd and in reply will state," to curl that spit-lock around their fingers; look around and see if their abbreviated skirts have gone to ballooning since last heard from, and then, settling themselves again in the chair, will calmly go on to write: "Your letter of the 15th incident received." In general, the more hair and the farther front it protrudes and the more it is

marcelled—the less efficiency and the poorer spelling.

Venus de Milo was another rather good looking girl. Next to Eve whom we admire for maternal reasons, she was perhaps as good looking as they make. Well—Venus did not seemingly waste any time on her hair. It was drawn back in a neat wave; pugged up and there it stayed. She said to Jupiter one day, “Jupe, believe me, I am one of those women who NEVER touch their hair, from morning to night.” And Jupiter said, “Veen, you suit me from the ground up.” Venus has been reasonably successful. She has had stars named for her; she has been put up at a good many clubs, in marble. Why, then, cannot the modern woman follow her example and find some sort of static condition of hair. Why do they move the terminal-station of the hair, otherwise the “pug” from side to side, from back to front and literally “go over the top” with it every three months. You and I recall when it hung low on the horizon over the coat-collar; then it leaped to the bridge of the nose; then it hung over the left ear and then over the right. Then it was obliterated altogether and made into an impressionistic picture of a hay-field after the grass was cut. Then it was Psychied or Clytied or otherwise “tied” and stuck out several feet due west into the horizon. Then it was puffed out at the side until a girl, coming head on, looked like a yacht with her spinnaker and balloon set, coming down before the wind. Then it developed nets and rats and looked like a bag of meal on the noble front of loveliness. Then it cultivated a suggestion of wilful disorder, a sort of zephyr-blown carelessness, like a ball of yarn, both ends of which have been lost in the knitting. And now—marvel of marvels, it is hiding the ears and will next be curled around the lip into an imitation mustache and around the chin into feminine whiskers, a la spinach.

Hear me again, O fellow-countryman! I do not care

a damb (revised spelling) about it, but the other day I saw a young woman with fine, well-groomed hair, drawn neatly back and not a single, up-to-date chorus girl, Mrs. V. Castle flummiddiddle about it and I was happy all day long. And I went home and took down the picture of my grandmother with her hair worn at eighty exactly as it was worn at twenty, and I said to it, "Grandmother! I understand now. The reason you accomplished so much in your life is because you did not have to devote twenty-five per cent of your time to studying some new place to put that dear old pug."

ON "THE SHRINES OF HOME"



OMEWHERE in every shrine of motherhood is a tiny pair of baby's first boots—crumpled little things, wet with a mother's kisses.

After that, boys' boots especially do not get much of a show as mementoes. They come and go—the little affairs—clomping and making much weary noise, but yet greatly missed after they are silent, the boy in bed—or perhaps slipped out of his mother's arms to lie long and still in the trenches under the poppy-fields of France.

What if they should come back and stand at attention along the old, yellow-painted kitchen floor back of the stove again as they stood in days of yore, all in a row. Perhaps it would make the tears come and perhaps they would often be chased away by smiles. And the girls' boots, too! Good girls, wayward girls, sweet girls, girls with flying hair, girls with sunshine in their eyes. Girls gone! Girls that may come back!

Here is a pair of old-fashioned copper-toed, red-topped boots with an inscription on the top—"For a Good Boy!" Those were the boots that father took in

hand forty years ago when he took his first-born son to the shoe-store for a first pair of kip winter boots. Dad was about as proud of them as the boy was. He wanted to know of the dealer if they were "real kip." "Yessir! Warranted." Those boots came home and were worn with self-consciousness. Men on the street would see them and suggest "Seems to me I smell leather." A boy would stand around waiting for comments on his new boots. Cute little boots, were they not—especially at night as soaked with the snow and wet by the mud they stood with little up-turned toes, back of the old kitchen stove.

You can see the little chap going about in the morning with his fingers in the straps trying to get the shrunken things on. He kicks on the base-boards and sweats at the straps. And at the night-time, what a ceremonial pulling off the boots—bootjacks and small boys assisting. It was some fun to back up to dad, take his number ten between your legs, grab hold of heel and toe and have him propel you forward with a foot on the dome of your little trousers. And the other ceremonial was getting out the tallow and the lamp-black and greasing them so that they would shine and resist the wet. We were very dressy when we had half an inch of mutton tallow on top of the old kip boots.

Do we live much outside of the children, after all? Something tender, something indescribably sweet and hopeful invests the soul as we ponder on the life that comes and the life that passes on thru childhood to eternal youth, elsewhere. The little feet that ran at play, that climbed into the lap of parenthood, that stumbled often on the way, that went yet more and more sedately as the years came and went and that, perchance, have now turned with cadence of music and waving of flags to the call of high duty into the way that leads away from the village streets into great

duty and perhaps the great sacrifice—what wonder that somehow they mean more to us than anything else, on the home-altars!

Small wonder, then, that baby's first boots should be the material memento in so many homes. In these hours, to take them out and recreate the dimpled little thing that snuggled under the heart; that had such fair blue eyes and such flaxen curls; that grew up at last and went away forever, is to live over again the elysium of young life in the shrine of the family. And it is this vision that leads us to take oath that by sacrifice and by giving and by fighting we shall forever maintain the right to have these fair flowers of our lives come to full beauty and fruition; in short, that government of the people, by the people and for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

ON "MAINE AND MIDSUMMER"



TO LIE on a haycock and watch the cloud-wrack in the sky; to follow the gulls as, lazily, they wheel above; to watch the blue sea heave afar; to feel the perfume of each dawn and catch the healing breath of every sunset; to live as fully and happily as one may live in these days of blood—this in Maine, in midsummer.

What other land approaches it in beauty! No tropic country with eternal sunshine; no land of roses all the year around; no valley of the "blest" compares with this rugged land of hills and mountains, lakes and running brooks, in its midsummer garb. Incomparable Maine!

This week we have felt, for the first time, the sense of the midsummer noon. The year has run thru its seventh hour and now sleeps in the silence and the

heat of that hour when, like the old-fashioned Maine village, everything is closed, the store-keepers gone home, the streets quiet. The summer haze lies upon the fields; the buttercups and the daisies yellow and whiten the rolling hills; the music of the mowing-machine comes up from the intervalles; the yellow-birds flutter thru the roadside trees; the wild rose nods and kisses its petals to you along the hedges; the brooks run noisily beneath the old bridges; the gardens lift their blossoms as if to say "plenty;" the blue mountains smile as if beckoning you on; the hills lift you up and up until they reveal the glimpses of the sea, the estuaries and the bays, that run landward from the sea; and everywhere, cooling in the breeze, comes the perfume of the sweet grass and the new-mown hay upon your senses.

Midsummer! Already the first glimpses of the golden-rod in the fields! Already that lazy sense of ripening-warmth, of Nature putting in her work. The heat in town; the buzzing automobiles along the country-highways with number-plates bearing the names of all the forty-eight states in the Union as they come and go; the thronging crowds on trains running double-sections; the congestion at ferries where there are crossings of rivers more peaceful than the Marne—all these tell of the peak of the year, when Nature stays a while and waits, delaying the chirp of the cricket and the first touch of that diviner-yet period of sweet dropping away to winter that we call Autumn.

Who would live elsewhere—once having lived in Maine? Who would exchange this midsummer, this autumn; this drowsy, dreamy age of life in Maine for any other, when in the distance, he sees as we who love it so well, ever do see, the coming of the first snows; the Thanksgiving season crisp and cool, the first snows tinkling against the windows; the incomparable contrast of winter! Which do we love the better! We

can hardly say. If midsummer with its elysian days is sweet, so, too, is the clear, cold, pure, healthy, wholesome winter season, when the snows lie white along the country roads; when in the blazing noon, it is silver and in the light of the winter moon it is golden, even to the end of the world!

And so—let us forever tell the truth about our Maine. Let us praise its beauties, as they deserve to be praised, and do it everywhere we go. Too many residents of Maine speak with a half-apologetic tone, in mentioning the fact that they reside here. Its history is the oldest and the most aristocratic of the states. It was settled before Plymouth. It has been the battle-ground of civilization while newer states were in the wilderness. It has peopled the Nation with brains and brawn. It has done its part loyally in every conflict for freedom, truth, nationalism and ideals. And here it is—fairer than ever, with its forests deep and mystic, with its country-side like a garden, with its sea-coast cupped with harbors and with its rivers rich in power.

Apologize! Instead we should hold ourselves as of the elect of the Lord; favored in opportunity; guardians of a heritage that is priceless. And all this, from the noon of a midsummer day, that is not midsummer madness.

ON "GOING TO THE DENTIST"



ALL I have to say about it is this. Some things have to be borne. You may be permitted to die peacefully, or otherwise, in your bed with your vermiform appendix still in your little inside, but, alas! a man cannot die of the toothache. Would that he could, but cases are rare. Death rarely visits with its balm, the person who has the toothache or the person who is sea-sick.

If people could die with the toothache, the dentist would have a harder time. As it is, rather than suffer the ills we have, we fly to others that we know not of. In olden times, the sign outside of the dentist's shop was a huge tooth hanging to an iron crane over the narrow and soiled stairway leading to his temple of pain. The old-time dentist was never in view when you went in. He was not surrounded by marble and ivory and running water and nickel-plated anaesthetics. Not so! He was in the back shop making teeth; and if he saw you come in, he would wipe the pumice-stone from his hands onto the seat of his trousers and pry open your mouth before you could say Jack Robinson. That swinging tooth represented the exact size of the tooth that he pulled. Every time, without fail, when as a boy, I parted with a tooth, it measured at least eighteen inches wide by three feet and a half long.

Treating the subject subjectively, there are some very good thoughts to be promulgated about the relation of the individual to the dentist—especially the old-fashioned tooth-puller. G. H. Derby, a humorist of national repute in his day, told a story about Dr. Tushworth, a dentist, that is but little known. The Doctor tackled a tooth once that he could not pull. The patient kicked some about the abortive effort. Doc Tushworth felt that a patient had no right to complain about little things like that—his business was to yank the molar.

So he invented a machine that worked by levers and exerted an enormous pull. When he pried open the patient's mouth and put in the active end of the machine and exerted a few hundred pounds of pressure, he noticed that the patient's right foot flew up in the air. He didn't understand the reason but he did not stop to make investigation. He added a ton or two more pull on the machine and the man's head pulled right smack off! at his collar button. Of course "doc" got the tooth even if he lost the man.

An investigation followed and they dissected the remains and found that, as we often feel about it ourselves, the man's tooth ran down into his body all of the way, pursuing a path down his right leg and having two prongs that were clinched over on the sole of the foot. That's why the right foot flew up when the doc began to pull. It saved the doc's reputation and got him off with a charge of justifiable homicide. The doc subsequently pulled on an old lady's tooth with this machine and yanked out her whole skeleton. He took her home in a pillow case. It happened that she did not die, so the doc was again lucky. And what was better, she lived seven years, known as the "India rubber lady" and was completely cured of rheumatism of the bones—having no bones to ache.

These are extreme cases from the view-point of the outsider, but perfectly credible to the man who in the golden days sat down and permitted the dentist to grab hold of a tooth and yank it in cold blood. Of course things are better now. One can almost go prancing into the door of the dentist; but in the old days while he went prancing all right, he did not always go in. I have pranced miles on the dead run to the dentist's and just as I turned the door-knob—pretty softly, too—the toothache has stopped in contemplation of the future. You can work that several times with some teeth. They are as intelligent as a dog that expects a licking.

I do not know as there is any moral about this talk, but I am sure that it is not immoral and that is a good deal. It is pleasant to know, however, that science is doing so much for us. It is taking our arms and legs off painlessly, removing our teeth with soothing music of the ether and the phonograph. Some day it may do as much for our sins and iniquities. St. Peter will hardly know us.

ON "RESPONSIBILITY OF A PERFECT BABY"



IT IS sometimes hard to tell about the Perfect Baby. Often it looks like its father and often like its mother and sometimes it looks like Grandmother Jones and frequently it is the perfect picture of Grandfather Pinkham, and then again it may trace back and leap over into some other family of kin, and look like Uncle Hiram Beebe—male or female, the responsibility for the physical appearance of a perfect baby cannot be definitely located. I have seen a baby that looked like some remote grandsire—whiskers, hair and funny look around the eyes.

After the relatives have located the lineaments in remote ancestry, the responsibility for the care of the child falls on a family council consisting chiefly of the mother's mother who is supposed to be very learned on the subject; the father's mother who knows so much about children that it fairly hurts her; the old maid aunt who knows a lot, but who blushes to say it; the nurse who is never any good, and on the father, incidentally, who runs errands and investigates the different kinds of nursing bottle, with a later preference for the automatic kind that get up in

the night themselves and heat the infant's pabulum.

There is no greater rush of business known to any household than the accession of about nine pounds of first child into a peaceful married life. It beats winning the war or hurrying up the ship-building program or making 12,000 aeroplanes in six months. A young father averages to be on the dead run to and from an apothecary shop eighteen hours out of the twenty-four for the first six months of the worry between wind and water of child. You can see them darting thru the crowds anxiously looking for an opening and a druggist. They carry their pocketbooks open all of the time in their hands. If suddenly aroused while napping on a street-car, they look at you blankly and say: "Yes, I asked for a dozen rubber-nipples." You talk about the responsibility of a perfect baby—it is largely on the perfect father.

Of course I am not going to say that after the nurse goes there is not some responsibility resting on the perfect mother. She has, of course, a very superior article of baby to take care of, in the first place. It is not at all like other babies—NOT AT ALL! It is far lovelier and far more nearly perfect and far more precious and far more intelligent. Hence her responsibility far exceeds that of any other mother who has just common-flesh babies. I doubt if a greater effort was made even in clearing out the St. Mihiel salient than in a young mother's first essay, unassisted, at bathing a damp baby in her lap. The responsibility is enormous. If baby should suddenly leap out of her lap! Later in life—say her fourth or fifth baby—why she can bathe it; read Lady Audley's secret; knit socks and chew gum, all at the same time, and if baby leaps—why she catches the perfect thing on the first bounce and never misses a stitch or loses a word or chews a chew, less.

Of course the responsibility of a perfectly perfect

baby is greater than the responsibility for a freckled, red-headed, colicky, yawning, criss-cross, sour-smelling baby. Of course it is. But who ever had one of the latter kind? Huh? Speak up! The responsibility for the care of a perfect baby is greater than the responsibility for a perfect husband—by a good deal. I doubt if there is a young mother who ever regards her husband with the same reverence after the first baby sets up its dominion. He is distinctly and unavoidably a second fiddle. He is often in the way. The responsibility of the universe seems to have suddenly changed. It is no longer on "Husband and Woodrow Wilson;" it is on the perfectly precious and lovely child.

It is sometimes said that when we go hence we shall re-appear as little children in the celestial pastures. We shall then know how to be perfect without discrimination, without responsibility. I wonder if it will be finer than responsible motherhood and perfect earthly infancy!

ON "THE GOING AND THE COMING"



THE tides of earth are not more persistent than the tides of life and nature. There is a going and a coming; a flux and a reflux in all the world, from *nebulæ* to atom, from life of man to life of star.

Progress is rhythmic. As the music of the violin swells thru the silence, so the music of the spheres touches the cold and silent spaces of the universe, all swinging to immutable law, balanced as finely as the needle on the fulcrum. God is master musician, establishing the harmonies, celestial and terrestrial.

We live in cycles, individually, socially in civiliza-

tion, in national existence. There can be no retrogression. What seems such, is the backward swing of the curve preparatory to an advance. The sea comes and goes; but it always advances upon the coast-line. The seasons come and go, but the earth itself approaches nearer and nearer with each springtime to the purpose for which it was ordained. There have been dark ages in the world's existence, in which it has seemed as tho the end had come to all advancement, only to break in fuller glory upon some renaissance of art or learning.

This is what cheers me in this war. It seemed as tho it were death to art, to music, to learning, to faith. We thought it, many of us, in hours of doubt a few years ago. Today, we see new ideals, new hopes, new faiths, new conceptions of duty and opportunity. Out of it are to come new liberties, new inventions, new conservations, new commerce, new arts, new friendships and from it will pass away many of the fancied bonds between peoples, kindred in ideals but separated by oceans and strangers by history and traditions.

It is perhaps a thin subject for your consideration, but there is an analogy in life. We learn by troubles; we grow by griefs; we develop by trials. There is no life that has not had its fluxes and its refluxes; its goings and its comings of hope and happiness, of welfare and distress. We watch the passing of beloved friends. The loneliness of life pervades every surrounding. But the new impulse is not often wanting to take up the burdens and carry them along faithfully. The sorrow ennobles. The grief purifies. Great artists have been developed by suffering. Insight into hidden things comes by sorrows. The Man of Nazareth was such. His deeps only emphasized the heights to which He attained.

This is a comforting thought if applied broadly and happily. The mother who mourns a son, "over there," carries a new conception of life along with her. What

she has lost is partly compensated for by what she has gained thru new Faith, pride in her son's sacrifice; joy that she gave and gave willingly. I do not know any leaven, working more surely for national ennoblement, than the prayers in little homes all over the land for repose of the souls of them who lie low in the trenches on the Western front. The widow's weeds, the mother's tears are to be the symbols of a new nation conceived in pain as is the lot of motherhood.

And the substance is: do not complain at things too bitterly and never despair! There is good in all chastening. Nothing breaks a man or woman but failure to keep pace with the return swing of the cycle. Watch for it and be ready. It will take you on as truly as the world swings on by rhythmic law thru all the precession of equinox along the pathway of the eternal stars.

ON "THE OLD TIME DISTRICT SCHOOL"



TAUGHT school once—but only once. My school was far from the madding crowd in the midst of a snow-infested region of Maine. It was a land of plenty—such as it was. One could use his knife without comment for the purpose of transferring nourishment to his system.

I was a sophomore in college, sixteen years old; weight 102, flat; size immaterial. On the morning of my arrival at the schoolhouse I found twenty-three pupils gathered around the old box-stove in the middle of the room. Most of the big boys had side-whiskers or mustaches. The girls were matronly. One of them was a red-cheeked Hebe who weighed about 192. They ranged in height from about eight feet tall down to pupilettes in pantalettes.

An interstate-tariff schedule of differentials on

freight, is like an A. B. C. to the job of laying out a running-schedule for an ungraded district country school. Every scholar has a different kind of book and wants to begin at a different place. I found an average of three classes to each pupil, which made sixty-nine classes for the day. Allowing an hour for recess, devotional exercises—which consisted in lugging in the wood and lugging out the teacher—this left me 2 14-69 minutes per recitation. This seemed short, even to me. It seemed to require condensation and intensive teaching. I did both. By cultivation of the latter I came to a point where I could hold the spelling book in one hand; point out the geography lesson on the map with the other hand; poke wood into the old box-stove with the other hand; hold the youngest scholar on my lap with the other hand, and wipe its nose, frequently, with the other hand.

That youngest scholar was a puzzle to me. It was five weeks before I knew whether it was a boy or a girl. I was very modest and did not like to ask leading questions. It was a boy. He came to school every morning with his countenance eclipsed by a hang-over from his breakfast. I made the mistake on the first morning of opening the business of the day, by washing the child's face. Every morning in our prayers, after the invocation "give us THIS DAY our daily bread," I mentally added "and molasses." Then I took the child to the snow-bank and got it. But it kept on daily, nay, hourly, exuding bread and molasses.

I can see that old district school now as I close my eyes; and, in memory, still hear the droning of its recitations. The sun still shines for me in thru the tiny old window panes on the long stove funnel, down on those battered little desks, and gleams on the silver snow-banks out-of-doors. In every snow-storm, I hear the whine of the winds and the ticking of the sleet around the corners of the little building, as it did in the

long years ago. And all of the memories are pleasant. Those moonlit nights around the neighborhood; those lyceums where old subjects were fiercely debated with fervid eloquence; those evening-readings when first the neighborhood became acquainted with Dickens and Thackeray. The eager thirst for learning that those boys and girls soon came to have; the comradeship that we engendered; the Latin lessons after school, the efforts to prepare for college and for normal school! All these form a chapter in memory that nothing will efface.

Some good, kind providence presided over the old-fashioned district school as an institution. It may have been in the native ability of the old New England stock, its brains and its ambitions. But I like to think that looking in at the window was the god of kindly future protecting the republic and preparing its boys and girls for higher missions; for out of its doors have gone good blood, fine intellectuality and high purpose for the development of a nation, whose fruits are seen in the ideals of this hour along the Western front. And every now and then I meet some of my old scholars of my only school, either a legislator, or a teacher, or a lawyer, or a prosperous farmer, and to each of them I say, "I don't know where you got it; you didn't learn it from me."

ON "THE NORTHWEST WIND"



SUDDENLY the wind had shifted. It began to blow in the northern windows, cool in the night. It rattled the halliards of the flag pole and swept things off the table.

It had been a long spell of fog at the seashore and the fog-signals had been droning for two days and the submarine patrol boats had been thrashing along in the obscurity—mists wreathing

the spruces and blotting out the sun and stars. "The Northwest wind will settle all that," said one to himself in perfect confidence; "for nothing else is so sure to drive away the clouds and fogs." And sure enough, dawn saw the finest scene that nature has to offer at the seashore—the perfect day. To see such a day is to live all over many dreams and find hope for new ones. Islands and opposite shores have moved up more than half way. There is so little obscuration in the atmosphere that it is like distance in Colorado mountains or in the dry deserts. A mile is like a hundred yards. You see new things over the way. From Squirrel Island, for instance, Monhegan, thirty miles away or Seguin over by the Kennebec, seem to be close enough to make possible new hand-clasps with Mystery. We see people on what seemed hitherto uninhabited islands out to sea. The Northwest wind brings us closer together.

The breaking day with a Northwest wind, means setting forth of harbor-stayed fleets—fishermen, old lumbering coasters, noisy motor-craft, pleasure yachts, and coastwise steamers. The sails come out shining like silver in the sea. Under foot of their streaming bows rolls a liquid floor of ultramarine, flashing with white tops. Everywhere the harbor is simply azure like the sky, with shining waves white-capped. It sparkles and seems alive. It is snappy and makes you think of the bending sail and the lee-shore. Every old coaster acts like a racer. She trims her sails nattily and tries to work a bit more speed out of the old boat. You hear them singing at the hauls. The day's in the dawn, the dawn's at seven and all's well with the world. It is good to be alive—heaven has not forgotten earth but has opened a crack of the door and let a little of its radiance down on earth and sea. And the clouds are fine and the sky is high and the trees are thrashing in pure fun of wrestling with the keen old northwest summer breeze.

We have fogs in the soul and fogs in the intellect and fogs in the home, as well as at the sea-shore. Shift the wind. Make it a northwester. You can do it. If the soul is sluggish, find with some spiritual, kindred soul the new breath that shifts the current of your being. If your mind is fogged, give it a breath of the west wind by a change of venue. If there are fogs in the home!—Simple enough! Get the folks up into the hills; let them see new lands; let them feel the touch of the eternal morning; let them forget the sordid cares and, in recreation and rest, even but for a day, restore the sunshine to the home; set the waves of love and companionship into motion; make a sparkle to the floor of life and clear the atmosphere of mists and misunderstanding, so that you can see more clearly, than before, the lovelight in each other's eyes. The weary wife, the petulant children, the tired husband! Fogs! fogs! all around the home! Let in the northwest wind. Change the currents of thought and feeling. Love is the last thing to pass in the mist—its eyes shining bright. It will be the first thing to return, when the mists have blown away in the northwest wind.

And then all your harbored fleets can set out with a following breeze. New cargoes, of all sorts, ambitions, faiths, hopes, courage, consideration, forgiveness, sacrifice, patience, peace, and all with a song on the lips just as the sailors sing of a clear morning out of port bound for new havens beyond the headlands.

ON "THOUGHTS ON THE HEN"



HAVING spent a portion of the day recently waiting for the arrival of a dumfingle for the carborundum of a Ford car, held in meticulous suspension in a farmer's dooryard, I had an opportunity to study the way of the hen; and she is in the way most of the time.

The hen seems to me to lack purpose. She has neither the definite nor determined aim that she should have, to be made into a text. The rooster has a rather better aim than the hen, but even the rooster lacks the art of going in a straight line. He side-steps and scratches gravel and sidles up and shows off a whole lot—like some people—before he arrives. The hen makes no pretence of knowing where she is going; and hence is less subtle. She is plainly without steering apparatus, either mental or moral.

There was a very handsome hen over beyond our weary Ford, which traveled around in a semi-circle. If this hen started for the water-bucket over by the barn, she took a course directly away from the bucket and finally arrived there by running across the road to escape two automobiles that almost ran over her. She then returned to the yard, reached the water by a trip around the barn, when all the while the straight course would have been devoid of danger and obviously nearer. Some folks are like that.

I noticed that a hen looks up to the sky every time it takes a drink. It is fair to assume that she is thanking God for the drink. After the prohibition amendment is passed by the nation, it is fair to assume also that men will be doing the same. If one hen decides to tackle the water-bucket, all of the rest of the hens feel convivial. You do not often see one hen, drinking alone. Some folks are also like that. Hens are taken with sudden and, to me, inexplicable attacks of panic.

For instance, waves of unrest pass thru a flock of hens. I lay there on the ground, very quietly. No hawk was in the sky; no hawkers on the premises. But every now and then the hens would huddle; a sort of tremor would pass thru them. They would cackle and scream and run about and then quiet would be resumed. What was it? Can it be true that souls of politicians are embodied in hens by the transmigration of the same,—the souls I mean, not the hens?

I have a notion that there exist whole-souls and half-portion souls and souls in side-dishes and yet smaller—like twenty-cent ice-creams and fifteen-centers and cones—for five cents each. Hens have small souls, I fully believe. Yet they do seem to me to have human suggestion about them. They act a good deal like people, but in a lesser way. For instance, I have noticed that hens strut when looked at intently—just like a girl with new silk hose. They preen and cluck and plume themselves in society. Cats do the same. A cat is almost as vain as a rooster with a red comb. There was one rooster in the yard that did not do a thing but prance around and lift his legs high and make a noise. He was prouder than a new Major in his first uniform.

Hens lack will-power except in laying eggs. I know nothing as a matter of fact about the chief function of a hen, but in practical things such as scratching a hole in the ground, the hen has neither will to do, nor power to persevere. She quits and runs hence. Her cackle is a desultory thing. It has certain musical notes in the alto, but all of them go to show that they are merely the residue of inattention to what was once a noble organ. Indeed the name "hen" is derived from "canere," to sing. She was once a singer—he, a chanticleer; notice the first syllable "chant."

The Moral of this is simple: no bird or beast or human that runs around in circles and refuses to lay

eggs or do work or give himself over to useful employment except when eggs, et cetera, are high, can expect anything else but deterioration! He is bound to degeneracy. He should go hens.

ON "FURNACES"



WHEN I get to thinking about hell philosophically, and want to feel my subject, I go down cellar and look at the furnace. With me it is a matter of temperament rather than temperature. The furnace looks like hell—or the way I have fancied hell might look—and it is dark and suggestive of coal-bills. And it squats on the floor, saturnine, mysterious.

Furnaces were invented a good many years ago, if we may believe the Old Testament. Three men walked thru a fiery furnace, according to Daniel, and came out unscathed. Any one could have done that in my furnace last winter, with the kind of coal the Fuel Administration was doling out and the local coal-dealers were hilariously selling at \$12 a ton. The three men were Jews—Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They probably knew that the coal was the heatless variety, dug especially for the year of the Great War, 1918, Anno Domino. You could not fool one of those lads on fuel. And the Lord was on their side and against Nebuchadnezzar and his furnace.

This is the season of the year when manufacturers advertise furnaces. Every kind that is advertised cuts the coal bill of any other kind of a furnace square in two. Take a pencil and paper and you can figure how, by buying two furnaces, you can get along without any coal, and by buying four furnaces, you can lay up enough coal to be able to start in the coal-business and

thus get to be a millionaire in a single winter. Then there is a sort of furnace, in the advertisements, that runs itself. It requires no shaking down; it starts itself in the morning with a push-button and a thermostat. You can even start it by having an alarm clock by the head of your bed which will not only start the furnace but will also pull the bed clothes up around you a little closer and give the baby his bottle at the same time. One of these super-furnaces will also carry out the ashes; shovel off the walks; take in the milk; boil your morning egg; and talk back to your wife. It will not pay for the coal; but as it does not burn any coal, you do well not to ask the impossible of a mere mechanical contrivance. There are limits even to the capacity of a super-furnace. If it will saw and split the wood; lug it in; build its own fires; heat the wash-water; keep the house at seventy, or rather sixty-eight (conf. Local Fuel Adm'r) and guarantee that the cook won't quit, it is doing enough.

But most of us have to get along with the old-fashioned, common variety of furnace. It enjoys work best in warm weather. Give it a nice, warm, summer-like winter day and it will produce heat enough to warm the State Capitol at Augusta. You can't keep it back. If you decline to give it coal, it goes out and gets it. But on a heavy day of cold, it will not work unless on time-and-a-half and double-time holidays and it could not heat a spare bunk in a ten-cent lodging house.

To return to my first thought—if any. It seems odd that from the beginning of time, they have depicted the future state of punishment as a spell of eternal tending of furnaces. Jonathan Edwards, who had some gifts, as a pessimist, regarding the comforts of hell, generally suggested that it would be a long job of shoveling.

There is only one thing, however, that the eminent

colonial preacher left out. He might have added "and you will have to pay for your own coal." If he had said that—well, there would have been no original sin in the U. S. A.

ON "HATS, HERE AND THERE"



FTER Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden of Eden and Eve took to dressmaking, nothing much was doing in millinery until the time of Sodom and Gomorrah. The first hatters and milliners set up in Sodom and then moved over the bridge to Gomorrah.

Now, everyone wears a hat. And Lot's wife is as fresh as ever in a new bunnit.

One time I sold a hat to an old-clothes man at college. After I came up here to work, I saw the hat in a second-hand store run by S. Record. It was mixed up with a lot of old army pistols. I bought it and have it now. It is of no value except to inspire memories. We used to have hats that lasted, when we were boys. A boy's hat went thru the whole family, just as dad's trousers did, and at the close they seemed as strong, if not stronger, than when they started out on their career of usefulness. You have seen them—old-timer—those boyhood hats that hung in the schoolhouse entry—changed by the sun, warped by the rains, but undying yet. They might fade but they never surrendered. Mixed in with the girl's sunbonnet—old-fashioned Shaker bonnets—they looked like yaller dogs troubled with the mange. Now and then they became elongated to peaks. Set one of these jauntily on the head of a red-headed, freckled-faced boy, wearing a

gingham shirt and huckabuck trousers, and you had a thing of beauty as unlike the modern boy as a Packard automobile differs from father's carryall.

The old-fashioned boy never had a complete outfit. If he got a suit of clothes from the village tailoress, he did not get a pair of new boots. Or if, by dire necessity, he got a pair of new boots he did not get a new hat. Never! He simply wore the new fixings and punctuated the awful condition of his hat. I have gone bareheaded to church many a time, flourishing my old hat with an aspect of hilarity that I did not feel, and banging the fence-posts with it, trying to wear it out. But it could not be done. Those old-time lids were "genuwine." Even an old-fashioned straw hat could be run thru the mowing machine and chewed up by the bull and yet be "good enough to wear again."

No person should buy a hat for another person. And yet no woman should buy her own hat. This seems foolish and contradictory—yet it works out that way. In my opinion, a War Board should be appointed to buy women's hats. No woman should invest in a hat until it has been passed on by the Shipping Board, the Fuel Administrator and the Army and Navy; looked over by Josephus Daniels and tried on by Woodrow Wilson. What we want in women's hats is to make the hat fit the woman. Up to now women have been buying hats because they were inherently "lovely," "darling," "wonderful," as they sit there on a pole, in the milliner's window. The woman never asks "Does the hat look well on me?" All she asks for is thirty dollars' worth of raiment, more gorgeous than the lilies, more brilliant than the sunset. Personally, she may have a face like a fried egg—the hat's the thing. Homely women ought to buy plain hats—and vice versa. Mother used to buy hats—hold there!—did she? No! She used to make them. Poor dear! I can see her now, digging each spring among her treas-

ures for a spring bunnit. One plume a year and lo! a new bonnet for the dear old head. And bonnet strings tied under the chin. Guess they never will get a style to beat it. When she went to church of a Sunday in May, in her new creation, and Dad had dug out his old tall hat and brushed it with a currycomb and donned his tricot coat and broadcloth vest and pants and put on a blue necktie—well, well, well, Oh Boy, and then plus.

The general conception of Heaven seems to be that we do not wear hats there. They will interfere with flying and the action of the wings. I shall be sorry. I don't know what I shall do to take up my spare time—no hunting for my hat. But, you see, it would be impossible to have hats in heaven—much as the ladies will miss them. Fancy Joan of Arc in a sailor hat; or Socrates in a plug hat; or George Washington in a plaid cap. So, we must do all our "hatting" here. For the elect, no lids in the next world; and a cast-iron one for the wicked with light asbestos for Sundays. So let us indulge ourselves here! Off with the lid!

ON "PLAYING THE GAME"



COME on—be a good scout! It costs nothing; pays dividends; eases up on the friction of the world and fits you for heaven.

It is hard for some people to be pleasant. We have to pity them. They may have reasons for not being gentle and kindly and happy. They may have corns on their livers; or warts on their spleens. Perhaps they make more bile than their circulatory organs can deliver. But there never was one of them who could not, if he really wanted to do so, become a tractable and decent companion. Many of them succeed in going along in an apparently joyous way, when they feel otherwise.

All honor to these heroes. It is the chap who has been soured by some personal calamity and who goes into a hermitage of the soul and senses; who crawls into an iron-clad tank and spouts flame at all creation, that we feel ought to be reached. He ought to know that nothing can have happened to him that has not happened to others in former days. Listen to what Euripides wrote, over two thousand years ago: "Naught else to us hath yet been dealt, but that which daily, men have felt." Suppose that a great calamity befell you. It is not necessary to be specific, in illustration, but let us say that it is something real, vital! Consider! It is just what has happened to others. Be a good scout! Take it like a man!

Here is a true story about a remarkable man who died recently in Auburn. He was a master-mind. His position in our social, intellectual and political order was high. He had the keenest, straightest-thinking brain that could possibly be given to man. He was at the apex of a lifetime of hard work—just when he had a right to enjoy the rewards of patient study, the accumulated lore of law and practice. He went to a

specialist one day to find out what was the cause of his illness. He received his death-warrant. He had a hopeless case of cancer. He might live a year, or two. He came home and went to work.

And then ensued a peculiar case of loving fortitude. He kept his hopelessness from his family. Never a word said he. A smile on his face, a laugh on his lips, a patient going about his work as long as strength lasted and then a final illness in which he professed a persistent hope of recovery to the end. And that is not all. Certain members of his family knew the situation also. Nothing was said about it. The wife was the only one who was unaware of the fatality of the disease and two years of such comfort as hope could give her were the reward of this family—each keeping the supposed secret from the other—the son believing that the father was uninformed of the nature of the disease—the father believing that the son did not know. And so this group, maintaining an outward cheer, went on to the end. You cannot beat it in all of the stories of heroism.

So I say to others—whatever happens, you can always play the game to the end. You can always be considerate. Nothing has happened to you that hath not happened to others. Play the game! Tune up! Be a "good scout."

ON "THE POET AND THE APPLE BLOSSOM"



NATURE is rather inclined to boast a bit in the spring—don't you think so? Some of the ugliest things delight in dressing up so that they are infinitely beautiful, as if to say: "We could be beautiful always, but we prefer to be useful." Beauty is religion in nature. About every animate thing in the vegetable world goes to church at least once in a year—a sort of Easter confessional.

I am thinking now about something that I consider the loveliest thing in the world. Fifty weeks in the year it is scraggy, rough, sprawling, gnarled and altogether homely. Two weeks or so in the year it gives itself up to its raiment. And then how it is adorned! It may appear, in a single night, to have put on its new attire, and, lo! it is one with the mother-of-pearl, the diamond glints, and the fluff of the angels' wings that we esteem may be the popular tints in Heaven.

We are even now upon the eve of the translation! It will be here soon—the most wonderful apocalypse. I am looking for it every morning from my window. It is the blossoming of the apple-orchards.

You, perhaps, take it for granted. All right. Go your way, stranger. But you really have no right to expect quite so much. For, where is there anything else in the world so beautiful as a Maine apple-orchard in full bloom? People go across the sea to be in Japan in cherry-blossom time. It is not so lovely as apple-blossom time in Maine. Wonder is that there are not already processions of poets on their way here to Maine, singing odes as they march and waving banners with iambs on them.

A proper poet—literary poet, I mean—one who really prints his verses, could get a lot out of a week under an apple tree. Of course the every day poet—

the one who only thinks his poetry and does not bother to write it, a much happier way for everybody—does get his dividends any way out of the apple-blossom time. He is usually very practical and owns apple-trees. He likes to see how they bud and how they blossom and how they fruit in the fall. But the Poet—purely literary—tho he has written of apple-blossoms, maybe has never seen one. Come over to Maine and lie down a week and look up thru the heaven-starred branches of the apple tree and see God. Come over to Maine and get a sniff or two of the perfume from a Maine hillside. Come over to Maine and learn the ways of the apple-blossom and the bee and the trout.

Did you know, for instance, O Poet! that it is not of much use to try to lure the big fish from the trout-inhabited lakes of Maine until the apple-blossom is on the tree. I knew a Maine fisherman, one of the best, who never wet a line until the trees in his own orchard were bouquets of glory. The fish know—you see! The fish have a habit of reviving from their winter sleep along about the time that the apple-tree puts forth her color. Nothing strange about it. Facts are, as a rule, the strangest things we know. Come on, then, Poet, and fish and think and think and fish and smell the sweets of heavenly things and see the raiment of the Lord cast down on the apple tree for an airing once a year. The Cherubims are wearing about all the old colors, as usual.

Old chaps can come back and be sentimental, in apple-blossom time. Perhaps, if they were born in Maine, they have certain memories about this time. An evening lamp, a low window, a woman sitting mending by the table, brothers and sisters studying lessons, in short the old, old home and the faint odor of apple-blossoms coming up out of the orchard. Every time you have smelled it since then—these fifty years, you

see the mother by the lamp, you think of old dad. You think of the lilacs, the old red lilacs up against the parlor window, and their perfume. I don't know where else over the old farm your memories may wander. I surely am not going to get sentimental over it.

But—hear me—there is a lot to this “apple-blossom” stuff.

ON “SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE”



IN ÆSOP'S Fables you will find the following: A Traveler hired an Ass to convey him to a distant place. The day being intensely hot and the sun shining in its strength, the traveler stopped to rest and sought shelter from the heat under the Shadow of the Ass. As this afforded protection for but one and as the traveler and the owner of the Ass both claimed it, a violent dispute arose between them as to which had the right to it. The owner maintained that he had let the Ass only and not the Shadow. The traveler maintained that with the hire of the Ass, he had hired his Shadow also. The quarrel proceeded from words to blows and while the men fought, the Ass galloped off.

Moral: In quarreling about the Shadow, we often lose the Substance.

Of course! If you never quarreled, the Fable has no significance to you, but if you have ever had a fight with another man or woman about something that did not amount to a row of pins, Æsop says something.

I saw a man and a woman a few months ago in the divorce court. There did not seem to be much of anything the trouble—too much “personality”—some call it “temperament;” better called “egoism.” Also thru the crack of the door, the court could see the sharp

nose of a sniffy mother-in-law. There are such critters—alas! Well—they were nice looking young people; too sensible to be fighting over his right to sit up nights and read when she thought he ought to be kissing her under the left ear. Too sensible to be fighting over her liking to go out and see the movies now and then, when he thought she had not the ghost of a right to spend money for such purposes. I could see the Ass's ears, crowned with orange blossoms, and surrounded by dancing cupids—if only the two little fools would kiss and make up and recall the fact that he is an entity apart from her, and she is an entity apart from him, and that each has certain rights to pursuit of harmless happiness. But alas! The Uncrowned Ass! It galloped away via the divorce court, taking with it what substance?—Two broken lives; the hope and happiness of two little children whom they had brought into the world and who have a right to the love of a mother and the counsel of a father.

You may recall instances where partners in business have not been able to agree over which was the boss. The business was prosperous and profitable. They liquidated. There was a case in our town of a most profitable shoe-factory. It was their affair—not mine, but the other day one of them said to me, "If we hadn't differed over nothing we would have been taking those profits up to this hour, for we were a successful team."

My friend, do not quarrel unless the fight is worth while. Fight for Right. Fight for Substance. Fight for the things that endure—chief of which is Justice to all men and women and children. But do not fight for the Shadow of a substance and see the substance gallop off while you are gouging and biting and rolling in the dirt.

ON "FEATHER BEDS, ET CETERA"



OUR Maine News Editor came over to my desk the other day and said: "They are having a law-suit up in northern Maine, over the ownership of a feather-bed. Why don't you converse with your readers on the feather-bed?" And she said it just as tho it were something soft.

Until this happened, we had supposed that the feather-bed was extinct, like the dodo and the great auk. We did not know that one was left in captivity. They used to be numerous and considered valuable. A newly-married couple could set up housekeeping with a feather-bed and a watch-dog. Do you recall the appearance of Aylward the Archer in Conan Doyle's "White Company" coming back from Flanders and the wars, bearing his richest spoil, a feather-bed, two varlets carrying it?

I have slept on a feather-bed in summer in the hot attic of a story and a half country farm-house, after a day when the thermometer had been 95 degrees in the shade, one window in the room and that about as big as the seat of my pants, crickets chirruping "more heat" outside, corn growing so that you could hear it, distant bull-frogs droning, and myself snugly and cosily ensconced in a feather-bed that kept crawling up around me with its hot hands and enveloping my system. I believe that after a youth devoted to such hot times in the old town, a man is proof against dissipation in this world and the next. Sure thing, he knows what heat is!

Under the feather-bed was a bed made of corn-husks. Everything right off the farm, as it were! And under that was a corded bed. Did you ever cord up a bed? There is some fun you have missed! You must be a man or else a farmerette, to do it modestly.

The cord runs from side to side and then longitudinally, making neat little squares, thru which you penetrate your legs and tighten the cord. Then you have a mallet and a wooden bed-pin which latter you drive into the holes in the side of the bed to hold the bed-cord preparatory to tightening it. Then the bed falls down. It always did and it always would. The proper way to tighten a bed was to walk down in the cross-cords and pull up the longitudinal cords. And if you were smart and strong, you could lift yourself by your own bed-cord. If there was anything I would rather not do as a boy, it was to cord up a bed. There was only one thing that had it tied to the spare tire and that was changing the tick on a feather-bed.

That was annual. You could tell when the neighbors were doing it in the spring by the flight of feathers. They would settle miles away and, as they came floating down, mother would pick one up and say, "That is Mrs. Tyler's feathers. She is changing ticks. Sonny, you get ready for tomorrow." I know of nothing more depressing than to shoulder a feather-bed—the goose-feathers or the hen's feathers of which have segregated in the southwest corner of the tick—bring it down stairs out of doors into the warm and unsanitary region back of the barn and proceed to change ticks by removing the feathers from one to another, meantime endeavoring to reanimate the feathers. You can do about so much in this world. But you can't put much pep into a discouraged hen's feather. I found that out when young and then and there declared that whatever business I adopted, it would not be that of feather-encourager. On a hot day, with feathers up your nose and tickling the back of your neck and sifting thru your kidneys and gall-bladder, it is not half as much fun as fishing on a good brook, under the shade of an old elm with the bobolinks singing their roundelays to your boyhood happiness.

I have known good old couples who have slept all of their lives together on a feather-bed, over a husk-bed, over a corded bed. It was as unsanitary as drinking out of a water-tumbler. But they lived to old age. I don't know how they did it. Yes—I do. They had boys who corded up the bed and manicured the feathers. Some of the boys outlived it. They are now sleeping on something other than feather-beds. It only goes to show that some things may be endured if you can get others to do part of the enduring. And that's the philosophy of it.

ON "STICKING TO THE JOB"



WENT fishing last week at Kineo. It was a day of howling winds and storm-driven sky—just the kind of a day to seek the lee of the coast, to fish along the shore under the tossing, wind-lashed birches and to dine on shore by the open fire with the guides deftly laying the table and pouring the nectar that IS coffee.

I had a Stanley spinner on my line. The guide favored a Cornwall spinner and all day long he bemoaned the fate that left us with no spinner to suit his fancy. "If I only had a Cornwall spinner." And yet I was catching fish. Furthermore, this guide was wishing we were in another place. "We ought to have gone down on the 'Toe of the Boot.' I never did like these Socatean waters." And so it was, all day long—the distant pastures always fairer to him.

After I got home and began to think about the guide and began to summon my proverbial philosophy to fit the case, I ran across this story in a little booklet that came to my desk called "McK, and R., Drug Topics," which is written by a very clever person. It was under the caption, "Oh, if I Only had the Other Fellow's Job," and was devoted to this idea—"Why

shift? Before you change be sure you are doing all you can where you are."

This was the story:

Grover Cleveland, when he was President, went out fishing one day with Joe Jefferson and William H. Crane, the actors.

After they had been out less than half an hour, without getting a nibble on their lines, Jefferson began to get restless and fidget about the boat.

"Let's move over there," said the famous impersonator of "Rip Van Winkle," "I'm sure we'll find it better. There's nothing here."

Cleveland said nothing—just went on fishing.

"This is wasting time," Jefferson continued in a little while. "We've been here 45 minutes by the clock and not one of us has had a bite. The fish must all be over on the other side of the pond. We better move the boat." Cleveland looked up from his line and dryly replied:

"Joe, when I was a small boy I went fishing with my Uncle Elihu, and I remember he told me that one of the secrets of success in life was to stick to the place where you'd thrown your anchor out. 'Too many folks,' said Uncle Elihu, 'spend all their time pulling up their anchors and rowing around; they don't catch the fish.' As for me, when I start in to fish, I sit right there and fish until either the pond runs dry or the horn blows for supper."

Many people in all walks of life who are sure there are no fish where they are, are aching to move and cast anchor elsewhere—just the way Joe Jefferson did. He made a million dollars out of the stage, but always was sure there was nothing in it. He wanted to be a painter. Comedians always want to be tragedians and vice-versa. They want to move on and fish elsewhere.

Same with lots of men in trades and business. They want the other fellow's job. The other fellow's

job!—How about your own?—Are you making the firm stand up on its hind legs and notice you? Are you putting so much pep into it that it can't do without you? Have you sewed it up tight? Have you cleaned up the pool until there is nothing left in it for you? If you have—move on; but if all you are doing is bemoaning fairer pastures and deeper pools “over there;” if all you do is act surly, complain that you are misunderstood; dawdling around and idling on the fish-pole, why—perhaps you better drop overboard. Nobody will miss you. If you are going to talk like a fish and act like a fish—better be a fish. The world is full of examples of success made by sticking to the job. The world is full of failures of men of marked intelligence who have roamed afar looking for better fishing “around the ‘Toe of the Boot.’ ” If you are fishing the pool—fish it out.

ON “THE BATH-TUB”



THE Bath-tub is an oval receptacle for the human body. It is about two feet deep and about twelve inches too short. It comes in several varieties from the sitz to the “snitz.” The latter is a kind of bath-tub that you look at but do not wet.

A bath-room with a bath-tub in it is a good thing to have in the house even if you have no use for it—because it gives you something to talk about. Some years ago, people would speak of the bath-tub in that casual, deprecatory way in which one nowadays speaks of his automobile, a sort of ticket, admitting one to the circle of the first-families. To say “I was in the bath-tub when you rung the door-bell,” was much like saying, “The winter I was in the Legislater,” or “the year

I was in Europe." It gave you a certain standing. It put your unwashed friend at a disadvantage. He could not expect to have the polish—ablutionary or otherwise—that you have when he practiced merely sectional and non-contemporaneous application of soap and water. There was no special distinction coming to him in society in those days, if all he could drag into the social chat was some such remark as this: "I was a'washing myself back of the ears when you was a-callin' for me." But if he could mention an "altogether," in a stationary bath-tub! Oh, Boy!

Perhaps you notice that I use the word "stationary bath-tubs." I do so with design. In olden days, one bathed in a tub which was neither stationary nor exclusive. Mother soaked the clothes in it Sundays; banged the washboard over it on Mondays; hulled corn in it Tuesdays; scoured it out Wednesdays and began to wash the boys and girls in it Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. It was a blue tub painted white inside. After it had seen use, it frequently developed splinters. I mention the fact because I remember it. I have some of them now, in my system, I think. We usually bathed in the kitchen; but often in the barn, or the pantry, or the parlor, or the dining room. One day in March it happened in the dining room. Mother was bending over me with a scrubbing-brush and a yellow pitcher full of soft soap and I was sitting on a splinter, when the schoolmarm butted in and asked mother why I was absent from school the previous day. It was referred to me and I had no ready answer. If you ever got a moist-licking in a wash-tub in the month of March, for playing hookey, you will know why I yet remember the incident. It is my recollection that in those days most of the "altogether" bathing was done in the spring and summer. It was difficult to bust the ice in the wash-tub after Thanksgiving day. So we generally confined our ablutions to a reasonable

reach below the collar button and waited patiently for spring.

Adam Thompson of Cincinnati, Ohio, was the first man in America to put a bath-tub with running water into his house, and practice winter-bathing. This was Dec. 20th, 1842. It aroused a nation to controversy. The medical profession, with its usual foresight, declared it a dangerous thing and bound to increase the prevalence of zymotic diseases. Society frowned on mid-winter bathing. Finally, Millard Fillmore, President of the United States, put a bath-tub into the White House, in 1851. That settled it. Society took it up and began to brag about bathing on other days than Saturday night. A New York hotel put in a bath-tub. People went far to see it. Royal Dukes were taken around to see it on their visits to America. It was not uncommon for some untitled person to be using it and compelled to dive under water while it was inspected by a Duke or maybe a common Earl.

There is much more I could say. But I refrain. Bath-tubs are but the beginning. For the day will come when sumptuous public baths will be maintained by every town of 20,000 inhabitants and when it will be fit cause for indictment for neglect or refusal by any municipality to comply with this law. Then, perhaps, we shall be clean—and Godly.

ON "CLOTHES"



WE ALL know something about clothes. Everyone has used them—except Adam and Eve—and even they had a definite, if limited knowledge of their uses.

When I was a boy, we had no children's stores. Your mother—old chap—used to cut your hair and your clothes. You can see some of mother's hair-cuts of sixty years ago—eight inches of hair chopped off at the coat collar and a lambrequin underneath. You used to whisper across the aisle in school, "Mother cut yer hair 'round a sugar-bowl!" And then someone got licked at recess.

Same way with clothes. Mother used to lay you down on the kitchen floor and mark a pattern of you out in chalk. And then she used to take a suit of clothes formerly belonging to some remote adult ancestor and of entirely different architecture and carve you a suit. We used to wear pants that had been what we called "razeed." They were shortened in the legs and reduced in the dome. As a result the pockets came down so far that a small boy had to double up to find his jackknife. I can recall the appearance of a boy in a pair of his grandfather's razeed trousers, with barn-door front. That was going some.

One good woman in my neighborhood used to put gores in her boy's pants fore and aft. Thus she got double wear, for he had to turn and turn about in those pants every other day so that they would last longer. Seats of pants were the most vulnerable portions in boyhood! I had a pair of pants once made out of mother's beaver cloak. They were nice pants but not very natty. The goods was very durable—being about half an inch thick. The finest thing about those pants was that they would stand alone. I could take them off—the cute little things—at night and they

would have done nicely for a double-barreled umbrella rack. When I first wore them to school the teacher kept telling me to please sit down in my seat and not half down. "Please marm," says I, "I can't sit down no farther, my pants is too stiff and thick."

I heard Simeon Ford speak once about clothes and he said that he once went to school in a suit carved out of his uncle's army overcoat. He entered the school with misgivings and was received with enthusiasm. Remarks were made calculated to wound his feelings. In order to provide for his confirmed habit of growing, tucks had been let into the pants front and back, so that the effect was more striking and bizarre than fashionable. It was common talk at that time that army cloth was all shoddy and no good to wear. The gossip was unfounded. The clothes wore like iron. He spent hours sliding down cellar doors and over the rocks but the hateful army overcoat would not wear out. Finally he got mad and outgrew it and it was passed on to some younger relative and probably some poor wretch is wearing it yet.

Of course, if we men could have our way, we would all be wearing kilts. They seem thrifty and cheap. I can think of some men in Lewiston and Auburn that I would as soon see in kilts as to wear 'em myself. If we could save enough on kilts we might buy our wives at least two hats a year more—and really all a woman needs, nowadays, is a pair of high boots, a few other things and a hat a week. But I am glad that it is so. Fashion is a fine thing. It makes markets and it troubles tight-wads. There never was an age meaner than that age when the old gent made your boots, mother made your pants and big sister chopped off your loose hair. It was mortifying. It spoiled a boy's pride. It kept his mind off his lessons. It was needless and ill-advised economy, in restraint of trade. You can't get business, unless you DO business!

It is just the same in life. It is mighty hard for a man to show up well in a formal assembly when he has a patch on the seat of his pants of a different color of goods. He can't make his way very well in society without a dress-suit. Once all we needed was a paper collar and a linen suit. Today good clothes, neat clothes, are absolutely essential. It was a shame—the way they used to dress girls and boys. Just as much a shame as it is to over-dress them, as some people are doing today.

ON "HELL"



O, DEAR friend! This is not to be a discussion of "hell" the expletive, but of "hell" as a location.

There is a popular revival of Hell as a future abode for Germans. There seems to be no other punishment to fit the crime. If there is not a Hell for Huns, what sort of a bogie man is going to get them. Yes! WE have plenty of room in our philosophy and religion, for some kind of a super-steam and poison gas hell especially built for the Pagan tribe of women-killers and murderers of the sick and helpless, that inhabit and fester the earth around Potsdam.

There is no history of Hell at hand. Its beginnings go back to the dawn of the human race. It seems to have been preached very strongly very early in the ministry. St. Thomas Aquinas, who was a rather dogmatic chap, about seven hundred years ago, informed a world that doubtless needed the information, that the redeemed in Heaven could look out and see the damned in Hell and have no sort of pity for their tortures. Somehow, today, there is a sort of comfort in that doctrine as applied to the folks that crucify captives and

shoot nurses. The early fathers of the church used these things on wicked people and perhaps did a lot of restraining work with them.

Now a few facts about hell. St. Bonaventura says that any human conception of hell is heaven compared to what hell really is. Now there is some power in old St. Bonaventura, is there not? He says that the damned are packed in at the rate of 100,000,000 to a German square mile. You notice that he says "German." Jerome and Tertullian say that the popular bath in hell is probably hot sulphur and burning pitch. Gulielanus Pariensis, an old ecclesiastic, says that according to his computation, there are 44,435,556 devils alone, but other authorities say that there must be a great many more to do the work of efficient and complete torture required. Jonathan Edwards said in 1741 at Enfield, Ct., that the bigger part of men that had died hitherto had undoubtedly gone to hell. Some idea of the population of hell may be gained by the statement of Dr. Louis de Moulin of the University of Oxford in 1680 that the population of hell increased at the rate of 15,768,000 a year.

There is some question about the location of hell. It has been located at the poles, at the antipodes, in the centre of the earth, in Mars, in the moon, in the sea. Tertullian and Dante placed it in the centre of the earth. This seems to be the popular location. Every time we see a volcano we think of hell and it makes us sad to think how its choice society up to the year 1914 has been partially and is to be completely ruined by an influx of undesirable, low-lived Huns. The absence of air, and the small size of the earth's centre indicating a scarcity of room, have driven the theologians to look to the sun as a fit place. So there we leave it. As to the shape of hell—it is universally agreed to be circular. No corners for escape. It is no place for plumbers, for there is no running water. Perhaps,

however, they might be useful in looking after the liquid fire. Possibly this vigorous element may supplant cold water in the domestic appliances of the Gehenna bath rooms, etc.

These are all of the actual facts I have been able to gather about Hell. It has undoubtedly outgrown the centre of the earth; is located in the sun; has a large population and is banking the fires and cleaning house for more. Personally, I do think that there never was a time when some sort of a reasonable sort of hell ought to be preached more resolutely than now. I don't mean to be cruel about it, but there is altogether too little said about the next world to keep some Protestants straight. They need a word of warning now and then about Hell. Make it to suit yourself—the size, location, temperature, sanitation, etc., but for the sake of a heaven here and hereafter, don't forget to preach that the wages of sin are death and that as ye sow, so shall ye reap.

ON "WEARING FALSE TEETH"



HAD a friend once who depended on me for advice and I gave it freely, feeling that it was mine to give and his to take or leave; and among other things, I advised him, often, to have his teeth out; buy himself a set of automatic chewers and enjoy himself.

He seemed to evade the topic except when he had the toothache, when he would come to me, plaintively, and ask me all over again—if I were he would I have them out. And not being my teeth, I always assumed heroic proportions and said "Sure."

One day he came home and smiled and then we knew. And I never saw a man open up as he did.

One could see clear into the back of his neck. One could positively see his indigestion. I could see his vermiform appendix when he laughed. I was simply fascinated by the man and could not keep my eyes off of him—such distances, such nuances, such a roomy tonneau, such guttural perspectives.

He lived with us that summer most of the time and I used to lose myself watching him develop into a sunshiny, toothless mortal, with a reach to his laugh that could take him over any bunker except tough meat. He fairly radiated sunshine. Look at him and see new vistas of his soul open up. Look at him and not simply believe in the hereafter—you could even catch glimpses of it. We reveled in him. We lost ourselves in his smile.

And then one day he came home with his new teeth in his pocket, a full set, upper and under. He sat with us a while, in his old sunshiny, open-faced self, looking when he smiled like the front doors of an old-fashioned country barn, empty of hay. And then he stole over to the sideboard and came back and when he came back our friend was no more. He had passed on. In his place was the original wild man of the plains, with a double row of gleaming teeth, thirty-nine in each set, upper and under, and each tooth sticking out nine feet in front of him. He clicked them at us and we got under the table, in fear. Head on, he looked like a rotary snow-plow in action. Every eye was riveted on the human Upper and Under. His old look of benevolence was gone. In its place was the aspect of the Walking Delegate of the "Cannibal's Amalgamated Union." His upper and under lips pursed out heroically to meet the gleam of the projecting ivories that looked like the front of a marble-worker's shop. The Second Maid came in with a dish of summer squash, saw the man at the end of the table, exclaimed "My God!" dropped the dish and fled. The teeth moved

spasmodically at us and seemed about to utter a remark. The wind whistled thru them like ghost-winds thru the keyhole of a murderer's house. Tremulously we waited for we knew that the teeth were struggling to speak. When they spake they asked the old, old question, "Are they good fithsh?"

We lied—au naturel. Our dear friend seemed to be pleased and he took the teeth with him on a trip to Colorado, the next week. He wore them two days and then used them to put against the doors of his rooms nights to keep out prowlers. He said that if he set them up, pyramidically, at the edge of his bunk in the sleeper, no colored porter would come around and disturb him even if he slept a week. He says that one night he awoke suddenly and caught the false teeth chewing the tassels off of the curtains of the lower section. Once when he came back to his room at a hotel to call for his key, he was resting himself by wearing his teeth in his pocket. The room clerk refused to give him the "other gentleman's key" and so he had to put in his teeth to prove his identity.

When he got back home, he was able to wear the teeth a part of the time and to eat ice-cream with them. His mechanical completeness came to pass with a good deal of delay and with apparently small progress. "I wanth you allth to underthandth," said he, "thath ith no eathy jobth to eath with an under theeth." But he began to gain. The consonants got past a little better each day. He got so that he could eat cereals pretty well. He finally graduated into apple-sauce. Then he captured the citadel of mashed potato. Then he went into the white-meat of-the-chicken class and finally he began to assume familiar outlines face-to and to eat able-food like the rest of us.

So—if a woman (or a man for that matter) asks you if her new false teeth are becoming and you can't e gracefully you get this piece of dental truth and

read it to her. Tell her that she can't sue the dentist for malpractice the first week. Tell her to wait and that ultimately the false beacons will recede and the world that once knew her so well will know her hence forth forever. Yea, tell it to her very teeth. At least she won't be able to bite you!

ON "WINTER DAYS AND NIGHTS"



ANY people count their years by summers and merely exist thru winters in waiting for the brooks again to be set free and the softer airs to blow. But it is very unwise to regard winter (the Maine winter even) as full of days of penance of hardship or of cold ugliness. If the pageantry of summer has gone, all the essentials remain, the earth, the fields, the mountain and the valley and the elemental glories of the infinite sky. If the earth is less fair the stars have rekindled their fires, the moon achieves a fuller triumph and the heavens wear a look of more exalted simplicity. If there is less of languor there is more of life. If there is less of art there is more of heroism. The New England winter breeds sturdier folks than ever did tropic lands.

If you who are of New England birth, ever think back to olden days; especially if you live now in warmer climes or are in cities, where once you lived in the country, you rarely think first of summer days. Somehow your first thought sees a winter-landscape, the pastures rolling away white save for the few out-cropping ledges; the fields laid with a tablecloth of white, the paths laboriously shoveled from house to pump, to barn; the highway broken out by the town-teams; the school-house half buried in snow; the driv-

ing storm; the battles with the winds and the snow, in which you came off victor; the leaping fires; the roasting apples and the popping corn; the wail of winds; the combats with nature in the daily surge to school; the biting cold and the tingling blood; the childish sports in snow forts and on the ringing steel of the ice-skates; the road breakers behind the toiling oxen, their voices clear on the air of the white day after the storm; the drifts behind the kitchen ell into which you leaped smothering with the purity; the woods resounding to the sharp ring of the axe; the farmer foddering his cattle in the barn with the steaming breath of the cattle on the eager air; the long evening rides to "lyceum;" to singing-school or to spelling bee; the fences rambling along trimmed fantastically with the ruffles and the scallops of the wind-drift; the rabbit tracks thru lonely forests; the dripping days when the eaves sang and the snow was easily moulded into snowballs, forts or snowmen; the sunsets and the dawns; the twilights and the home-circle; the comfort and the joy of good housing and sweet contentment.

All these must linger with you. There is a poignancy to these memories that childhood never lost who it never knew its philosophy. We of New England lived double experiences; enjoyed more wonderful gifts from Nature; were blessed with more abundance of Nature's show than those who have but the alternating seasons of dry and wet and live forever without the stern experiences of winter's buffeting. "The simplicity of winter" John Burroughs says, "has a deep moral. It is a return of Nature after a career of splendor and prodigality to habits so simple and austere that it cannot be lost on either the head or the heart. It is the philosopher coming back from the banquet and the wine to his crust of bread and his cup of water."

These things are perhaps responsible for that finer

spirituality; that stronger discipline; that more courageous heart that early endured and yet endures in New England civilization. It may account chiefly for its fearless men and women partaking not alone of the splendor of the imaginative and artistic summer of our incomparable hills, but also of those deeper tints of the golden autumn and the calm and placid austerity of our matchless winters.

I pity those New Englanders who flee to Florida and other languorous and lazy retreats. They carry little of the old spirit of their ancestors who thought nothing of long journeys by sleigh over miles in the dead of winter for pure enjoyment and who lived beneath glowing suns and under silver moons with the snows mounting high on either side of their lonely pathway. Achievement was there. Life is not in the joys of the Hedonist but in the conquest of the environment. One does not flee winters but faces them. One does not avoid the problem of existence; one solves it and by so doing becomes the stronger. The pathways still stretch over New England hills clear in the light of the moon. The sled runners still creak on the snow of the frosty dawn. There are blazing noons and nights when the stars are fairly afire in the velvet blackness of the skies. We love them. Our summers are the sweeter for them. Our spring-time comes as heaven must come after the passing on. We are the stronger for our victories, the more substantial for our effort. And the day will come when people will not go away from New England, surely not from Maine in winter, but will come here as to an austere yet incomparable home of beauty to worship God in His purest physical manifestation and here find the regeneration of body and soul that shall fit him for fuller enjoyment of those softer airs of Eden that breathe over this paradise in the days of summer.

ON "PAPER COLLAR DAYS"



WAS looking over an old trunk the other day, when I came across an old paper collar and I could not help sitting down and holding it in my hand and thinking over the days when we wore them, wondering, in the meantime, what modern boys would do, if they had to wear such things.

If I remember aright, one could buy a dozen paper collars in a nifty little round box—useful around the house—for twenty-five cents. No boy, in the era after the war, ever had a linen collar. He would scorn such an effeminacy and would be laughed at if he wore it—paper collars were distinctly *en regle*. A dozen paper collars would last indefinitely, according to prudence and the size of a boy's neck. They were good for a week apiece any way, so that twelve of them lasted three months and, as we never wore them except on state occasions, a dozen might last six months. And if we were prudent they could be turned and after they were turned, if we bust the reinforced buttonholes inumping around and "wrestling," we could have the rims of them sewed to the flannel shirts with which we wore them and they would endure yet more resolutely to the bitter and unwashed end. When a paper collar was done for—it was done for.

In my memory, somehow, there obtrudes also half-faded memories of paper collars on gingham shirts. Paper collars, too, on red flannel shirts; paper collars that were too large; paper collars that were too small—paper collars of extreme fashion and with beaded and ruffled rims; paper collars that shone like the back of a hack.

Paper collars are of the age also of copper-toed boots and mutton-tallow on cowhides. It was a fine, invigorating sight to see the gathering at a singing

school; hear the cowhides romp; smell the mutton taller frying out of the footgear and see the paper collars bust in the strain of reaching the altitudes of tenor. A friend of mine who taught singing-school used to tell about a boy in his adolescence who sang bass thru a paper collar—i. e., the wind came up thru it to his vocal organs. He was over in the tenor section by choice one evening in the old singing school, when the singing master caught him. Said he, "William, what in time are you doing over here and what kind of a noise was that I just heern you a-makin'? What do you think you sing, anyway?"


"W'a'all," said the young man, "usually I sing bass; but jest then I was a squawkin' off on the leftenant." So you see what difficulties we had with adolescence in those old, dear days. These scattered memories are such that one evades none of them with surety—he is insensibly dragged backward to live again in paper-collar days. Boyhood was restricted in appearance. Girls wore gingham and looked angels. Boys wore paper-collars on flannel shirts and smelled ancient of days, on occasions. If I delay to think, I see red wrists and cuffless shirts. I do recall paper cuffs, however, fine and shiny; detachable, as all cuffs ought to be, so that on the slightest suspicion of soil, even in company—just to show one's punctiliousness, one could take them off and shift the ends. I wore that kind of cuffs even when I was in college—so did everyone else except possibly one or two of the ultra set.

Yet memory runs along and somehow resolves itself into the perplexities of breaking away from social calls. Nothing seemed to boys of those days more difficult than to know when to go home of an evening when making a perfectly correct social parlor-call on a nice girl. Conversation had a way of giving out. Paper collars had a way of growing tight. Woolen stockings had a way of swelling. Boots had a way of tightening

Cotton flannel undergarments had a way of itching. Hands had a way of reddening. Hair had a way of sticking up. Air-tight stoves had a way of making for somnolence and nobody had invented a polite way of breaking loose from the circle, without danger of falling over the braided rug.

O, I don't know—this paper collar had led me afar, into that dim past, replete with the simple things that somehow seem dear to me, as ever; and not at all laughable—only sort of sacred. I seem to see the boy that was myself, as you see the boy or girl that was yourself, as another being—as indeed he was. Of you yet not at all you! A strange, awkward, tongue-tied, homely waif was he, and pity stirs you and tears may fall at memories that surround him. The world changes only in manner of living; only in regard to collars and cuffs, never in soul or ambition or hope or dreams or loves. Tender about our necks cling the arms of them that were of that time and are no more! Soft thru the veil, come their familiar voices. Clad in homely garb, tho they may have been, yet the eyes are as loving, the voices as tender and the hand as soft upon our brows as tho the body had been clad in the fashions of today—that also will be old, old fashions some day, when we are dust.

ON "THE BROOKS OF MAINE"



DOES your mind ever turn, old timer, from where you may be in some alien land, to thoughts of the Maine brook that ran along in the old place of your fathers? Intervale or woodland, winding here and there like an aimless child, or else bounding along on business bent, it is here today, just the same as it was when you trudged it barefooted, fishpole in hand, half century ago.

I can fancy you, out there in your land of the sage cozening yourself with artesian wells, windmills, and the turgid movement of the water in the irrigation ditch, yet hearing the voices of old brooks at home their whispers by day, their lullabies by night. The Brooks of Maine! Myriad as the stars are they, and as different from each other as the hills from which they spring—Katahdin, cold, remote, granitic; Abram tree-embowered in the clouds; Bigelow, bordered by peaceful farms; Spencer, a shy creature of the deep woods, shapely as the fount of life itself; and thousands of lesser hills, each brooding over its water sources, that tumble down to level lands and thence go meandering to the sea. A million waters flashing in the sun or winking in the rain; hiding beneath drooping trees; whitening over tiny cataracts; drifting into deep pools, where the trout lie, fanning the current breaking over the barriers of the beaver; wandering aside, into lagoons and eddies, and watering the shores where bloom the iris and the cat-o-nine-tails.

It is worth something to have been born in a land like Maine that was set up edge-ways. Nature made Maine special and to the order of the angels who adore beauty. The waters of the sea, they cupped our harbors, and the Lord thereof, He built the hills, that they might gather the snows that swirl over them in our majestic winters and that they might also brood over the brooks that are born in the first flush of spring. Do you see them? They are like a lace-work of silver in a field of crystal and emerald! They are like the jeweled fingers of a beautiful woman on a plate of jade. And when the hills flame, Nature stands aside and smiles and says "Look at my handiwork." And all the hosts of Heaven smile and are glad!

Here is the old, old Maine brook that you remember. It is loitering thru the meadow at the foot of the pasture. It is crossed by the old log and the stepping

stones. The cows have cropped its banks until they are as velvet lawn. It winds here and there thru the sun-swept emerald with a thin line of shadow. And away it goes thru tiny swimmin' holes to the bowlders and the granite bed of the old post-road. And then a little farther on, it plunges into the edge of the woods and begins to be a woodland stream. It here finds its voice and it is myriad. Trees bend over it and kiss its running waters. It leaps over rocks and splashes into small pools where you may lean and drink. It broadens into fairy bowers with mossy banks. The winds overhead fleck it with patches of sunlight and make it gleam against its half-tone shadows. You may lie by its comforting side; or see blue skies in its deeps; or commune with it in the conversation of the soul. Or you may wander on to its source and find yet farther on hidden springs from which it might have sprung and not half tried. You knew every foot of it and can follow it, in your memory, by day or by night, whether you be in desert or in the town.

Not until water fell on earth could life appear. Not until the sunlight came could there be rainbows and flashing light thru green boughs. Ages passed before brooks ran and clear-petaled flowers gemmed their banks. I do not want to set more sail than we can carry, but the brooks and hills of Maine are symbols of a perfecting world. They have a deeper significance than mere running waters. Like the shadows that came first as a sign of a new order of the risen sun, first breaking thru the mists that enshrouded a dead world, that it might live again; so the waters are a part of the same new order and shall endure as a sign of the growth and development of God's plan. "He shall drink of the brook on his way," says the Psalmist, "therefore shall he lift up his head. Praise ye the Lord."

So—the brooks are all here as of old, Old Timer!

The watcher in the skies may see them breaking from border to coast, from North to South. They sing by day and by night, all thru the year, when free from winter's bond and even then beneath the ice and thru the snow. We yet lie by their banks and watch them go along their happy way. We hear them in the nighttime, crooning to us. We go to them by day and are refreshed. Their waters are as clear as crystal and as sweet as the perfume of the cedars of Lebanon. We turn the prows of our canoes into them, in the sunset hour, and watch the trout break their still surfaces. We wander by them, wherever they may lead. We drink of them by noon-day and lie down by them to rest in peace by the evening camp-fire. They talk to us; they make us glad. The beautiful brooks of Maine.

ON "OLD-FASHIONED CELLARS"



MIND me as I look over the Thanksgiving table of those olden days when the cellar was the store-house of the old-fashioned country-side and when there was no such thing as celery or salad or grapefruit cocktails, but when the dinner began with the meat and ended with the pie. Those were the days when everything was on the table when mother came in and taking off her apron and wiping her hands on the kitchen towel hanging over behind the pantry door by the pump in the kitchen sink came along and sat down like a lady and ate her dinner with the rest of us and nobody passed anything around the table and it was a decided faux pas for any one to leave his seat unless he were choking to death.

Deep in the cellar-ways of those old-fashioned win-

ters were the things on which we lived—never a trip to the store except once a week or so when we went after the weekly paper—and no fol-de-rols except the things off the farm stored in the goodly barrels of the old-time country home. As a boy, I doubt not that you remember the cellar-way, with its barrel of buttermilk at the first landing; the stone flagging cool in summer and cold in winter where mother kept the crocks of butter shining with sweat on the outside of the crock; the barrels of apples extending row on row into the distance of the dimness, the barrels of salt-pork, the strings of red herring, the barrels of cider and vinegar, the kit of salt-mackerel, the “kental” of fish; the seckel pears; the russet apple barrel open for the boys, the big tin cake-box where mother kept cookies—what a place; what opulence and what sensible, good food for a sensible, good people. No dollar and a quarter candy, no cereals, no imported fruits, no cucumbers in winter, no expensive melons from New Mexico at a dollar a melon—simple food and simple living and red-cheeked children around the table with glad appetites and cheerful welcome to the heavily laden plates as they were passed around.

I take the old-fashioned cellar as a symbol of provident life and patient, simple ways. In its dimness I see a primitive folk and an industrious and frugal citizenship. Out of its dim space arises fragrance of many a happy hour and the memories of people whose lives were passed in industry and who lie low along the grass-grown sward on the New England hills. I see the simple and serene country life—the low sweeping fields of winter glistening in the December snows and oft creaking to the sled-runners along the country highways. I see the schoolhouse on the hill and the slow train of red-mittened boys and girls plowing their way to the dim and odorous schoolhouse thru whose small windows streams the faint light of the December

afternoon. I see stone-walls buried in snow, cows in the tie-up, ponds gleaming in ice, hills inviting to coasting, starlit nights and dawns rising in peace to the smoking of the neighbor's chimney. I see everywhere the contented and the work-a-day life, with its pains its tragedies, its joys and its rewards; and dreaming of the store-houses of our providence, I ask if we are doing better today in the lives we lead than our fathers did in the long ago.

Evenings by the lamp—what memories they bring—ciphering on the kitchen table out of Greenleaf's old Arithmetic, problems that our fathers had solved much as we did and whose solution carried the tales of many a neighborhood contest and many a district dispute. Brother's head bending low—he died long ago—sister's fair hair with its golden braids on her book before her; the old red table-cloth; the kettle singing on the stove; the snow blowing against the windows; the slow rote of mother's rocker on the sitting-room floor; the rustle of father's newspaper—a Weekly, by the way, the song in the chimney, the joy in the heart of youth.

It was a fortress of love with the food in the cellar. It was a self-sustaining, free life; dependent on nothing but the toil of the hands and the foresight of the brain, laying up the food for the household like the squirrels and depending neither on coal-operators nor railroad brotherhoods; wheat from the fields; corn meal from the two-acre lot; dried apples in the open room, cider in the cellar and plenty on the tables.

I have no fault to find with life now; but the discontent of never having enough; the slavery to things; the knuckling to the jaded appetite; the cultivation of divided tastes; the truckling to children's peccadillos; all call to mind the memories of that staid and happy time when the old-fashioned cellar supplied to a simple and frugal people the comfort and joy of long and peaceful lives.

ON "THE LITTERED DESK"



NE'S DESK is a companion, a reflection of the man. When I see a desk swept clean, fair, fleckless, beautifully shiny, the ink-well just here and the pens just there, the whole expanse shining like a field of ice under the blazing sun, I expect its owner to be a precise business man, with a pink in his button-hole, a white edge to the lapel of his vest and a clean shave every morning. I do not expect him to be a book-lover, a frowsy editor or a working lawyer.

To me a desk is as a bosom, on which one rests his head; a confidant to which one appeals; a volume of memories; a voice, inaudible except to the imagination and speaking out of former days, rich in solicitude, tender in affection. Here lie your vanished years; hereon sleep your dreams and your better thoughts waiting to be aroused anew. Here are the mementos of sunny days and winter days and days when the rain beat upon the windows and wild winds shook the panes. Hereon, piled deep are relics of hours when you have been joyous and hours when you have been sad. So, I like a desk to be battered, old and friendly; littered with books and clippings and hidden things about which nobody knows, but myself. I like it to have about a square foot of space on it that is empty swept and garnished, whereon, I may get a rest for the elbow and can write all I wish to say. Such space is sufficient. Shakespeare needed no more. I like a big desk; for the bigger it is the more you can pile on it and the higher you can build the pyramids. It must be a flat-topped desk. A roll-topped desk is an abomination of artificiality. One look at a roll-topped desk is enough to kill the finest train of thought that ever wandered into my poor, benighted system. I like a big, flat-topped desk pushed into a corner so that I can lean the lovely accumulation against the wall. I like it also, so

that one can put things underneath it, to dig them out later when one has nothing else to do.

Can you tell me what starts a train of thought? Perhaps no one can exactly tell at all times, but it is certain that a bare-topped desk with never an association about it, rarely can do such service. But a scrap of paper, a newspaper clipping, a book laid upon the littered desk may do it. You laid it there at such an hour on such a day. Possibly, at the time you put it there, it was snowing, brightly, outside, in great white flakes, that recalled a day in boyhood's spring when the sap was flowing and you loitered along the way with a red-cheeked girl. In your mind, you say, "the old sap-orchard, some fine day I will write about that." It is usually some tangle that connects up with the intangible. The littered desk has always its ghosts of yesterdays and its suggestions of tomorrows. It treasures not clippings or favorite books buried under masses of inconsequentials, but trains of thought. If you dig deep enough you will find them. Marcus Aurelius may be loafing away under Thoreau; and Boswell may be under his dearest enemy, Tom Macaulay, and there may be vagrant verse, unfinished manuscript, old friends interrupted at half opened doors of thought and still waiting on the threshold. Listen to them in the silence of the twilight rooms. The firelight plays and there is a sound almost of whispering from the soul of the littered desk.

I do not urge habits of untidyness. I do not say that an unlittered desk is any royal road to anything; but I do say that whomsoever depends on a littered desk should be indulged in his idiosyncrasy. He should not be disturbed in his domain of dreams and peace. He should retain its pyramid of papers, books, clippings and trifles if they please him. Let no one touch them at his peril. Let no mere woman come housecleaning into this museum of dependencies. He alone knows

what it means to him. A good woman, cleaning house, threw Sir Richard Burton's "Scented Garden" into the fire and the world lost a book, which perhaps it could do as well without; yet which it still weeps for as the fruitage of the lifetime of this strange man. Whatsoever passes from it by true development into the life or the thought of the owner of the littered desk goes into being elsewhere. Thus it is treasury and proving ground—to be left alone by the hands of others than his who is responsible for it.

Many people come into my office and sniff at my littered desk. They do not understand. Give me time and I can find anything on my desk—except money. It loses nothing; it preserves much; it creates all that can be created by me. It is mine and mine alone, the littered desk.

ON "MY GRANDFATHER'S SYNTHETIC WAGON"



MY GRANDFATHER was a ship-carpenter and as my father used to say "was a fast workman but some of his work was cussed rough." He lived to be 88 years old and in the last days of his retired life he still practiced the arts of carpentry, much as the poet

Horace wrote poetry on his Sabine farm. In other words, it was grandfather's habit to pick up a wagon spoke and surround it with a wagon and then put out a sign in our front yard labeled "For Sail or to Swop." Not that Horace ever "swopped" wagons, but then my grandfather's name was not Horace, but Reuben. I want to say right here and now, in justice to the literary attainments of my grandfather, that he did not

write the signs, but that they were written, composed and set up by our farm-boy, Albert Niles, who preferred that style of orthography. And my grandfather evidently thought that the spelling lent piquancy to the exhibit. Albert often showed further originality by writing the letter "S" back to, which gave the exhibit a certain rakish look.

Grandfather was a synthetic wagonist. Perhaps you do not undersand me, but that's what he was. He could take the spokes of one wagon and the rims of another, the body of another and the thills of another and make a perfectly good wagon out of them. Where they did not join exactly, grandfather put in putty. He was the finest puttier in Sagadahoc County. He worked in a little red carpenter shop in the front yard with a blue door—I mean that the shop had the blue door, not the front yard. Here he kept his putty. We boys always had all the putty we wanted and a boy needs a lot of putty, if he can get it. It is good in bean-blowers. Grandfather never wasted anything, especially paint. All of the paint he ever had he kept mixing right over again. Thus he never had to buy any paint, for if a painter keeps right on mixing what he has left, he will, of course, always have paint, for how could he mix it if he didn't have some. He had another habit as a painter—he always mixed the paint-skin right into the paint. I have seen him concocting a new color out of his various belongings. He had lost the first joint of his forefinger and he used to try the color on the stub.

Of course, it was always a matter of conjecture what color would result after grandfather had mixed up a batch of paint for one of his synthetic wagons. He might get a delicate mauve one time and deep pea-green another. I think pea-green was his best bet. If you mix a lot of paints, pea-green will generally result with accent on the pea. But I have seen wagons in our

yard that showed designs that no catalog could name—reds of variegated hue with blue wheels. And as grandfather never threw away a paint skin, their glistening residue shone on the surface like golden sequins on a lady's gown.

We had a man in our town named Fred Adams who ran a stock farm and who had a pace-making runner named "Foxy" that could run a mile around 2.10, to wagon. Adams was coming by our place and he saw one of grandfather's synthetic wagons standing there "for sail" and he bought it; hitched in Foxy and started for home. Foxy moved along briskly in his new variegated wagon, all going smoothly until about a mile from home when a piece of grandfather's putty flew out and struck him in the rump. Foxy thought it a fleck of the whip and he leaped to "a fast mile." The disintegration of "Pa's" (we always called him "Pa") wagon began. You could not use one of Pa's wagons over-roughly. They were not built for anything but a "sail." My cousin Willard, who lives in Wellesley, Mass., says he saw the incident and he declares that a piece of hard putty clipped a piece out of Adams' ear; a spoke came out and hit "Foxy" back of his neck and then the horse hit the high spots. The wagon bumped into the gutter, the tail board jumped out; a screw worked out of whip-socket; the whip went by the board; the air filled with spokes; tire and rim rolled off the nigh hind wheel—the flying parts urging Foxy to new endeavor. When Adams came within 200 yards of the barn, both rims were gone from the rear wheels and the wagon was revolving on the hubs. Adams was holding to Foxy and the front wheels were going, but the wagon was evaporating at the rate of a pound of putty to the second. When Foxy hit the sill of the barn door there was the final resolution of the synthetic wagon into its component parts, but Adams went into the box stall on his belly, hanging to the reins

with the wagon tire of the front wheel around his neck and a wagon spoke in each pants pocket. And that was all that was left of Pa's one-hoss shay.

I understand that grandfather took the remains back and built twelve wagons out of them—all synthetically. A wagon was a wagon in "them days."

ON "BEING GRAND HIOSCYAMUS"



IT'S WORTH while—for some people—to be Right Worthy, Noble, Grand, Sublime, Imperial, Most Excellent and Illustrious Chief Regents.

It's an honor—of course it is. The office itself says so; the confidence reposed in you by those who wouldn't do the same work at any price, says so. It's a tribute of baldric, jewel, glave, censer, turban, crown. It throbs with every heart-beat of adulation. It sets you on a throne, made of real brussels. It puts a crown on your head—in architecture a bean-pot or an inverted cuspidor, done in red satin. It strings a chain of brass around your neck carrying an emblem weighing three pounds and calculated to make a country constable's nickel badge turn green with envy. A wholly respectable, red-haired, freckle-faced, commonplace man invested as Grand Illustrious Pontificabilus of the Order of Eastern Nannygoats, frequently by force of circumstances is forced into the lime light, and when thus arrayed as an oriental despot, brass-trimmed from toe to crown, he looks the limit.

I recall seeing one of them once, wearing an ermine robe of Royal Magnificence, who, though he might have been graceful in overalls pumping a handcar, was badly

distract as King. And I came to pity him; for he fell over his own Royal Jiblets; stubbed his toe on his title; banged headfirst into his turban; upset the Royal Arcanum; tipped over the Oriental Obsequies; right obliqued into the Perfumed Censer, backed up and clashed down the Three-edged Sword; got his right leg poked up through his baldric; stuck his toe in his left ear; got his right arm indefinitely mixed up with the ermine interlining, and finally opened his ceremonial from behind the breastworks by yelling: "For the love of God, will some of you fellers come up here and pick me out of the ruins!"

This man was never built for Kinging it.

He never was a real, genuine, natural Royal Pontificabilus. If he had been he'd never have known that he was out of order.

The real Royal Pontifex stomps around regardless, and thinks he is real good. He slaughters the King's English in a beautiful tremolo, and looks to see the crowd sit breathless at the spectacle. He says, "If the candidates will now approach the altar, I'll have the chaplain administrate the oath." If he happens to fall off the throne in anti-climax, he looks it up in the ritual to see if it jarred any of the "Sublimes" out of him. His jewels clink when he walks like the harness on a high-stepper. For the time he is indeed Royal. Ermine is what he wears when he saws wood and does the chores at home. The baby has ermine bedclothes. His wife is Grand Royal Lady of the Order of the Perfect Sisters. They all have "past-jewels," unostentatiously displayed on the parlor what-not. You can't get into their front entry for the way the plumes tickle your nose. He wears seven badges on his coat front, and his wife pins up the baby's didies with maltese crosses. He has a door-mat with a camel on it, and the Pyramids of Egypt are on his crockery. You can't jar one of these Knights of the Royal Pontifex, whom

Heaven hath divinely made for office; for does he not stand beautiful under the Canopy and can he not deliver the Ritual in a basso-profundo voice with fur-trimmings! On him impinge honors naturally. He is delegate in perpetuum and has influence with Grand Bodies! He marches at the head of the Procession, behind the band; stepping high; plumes before and behind, and there isn't a bit of doubt that he knows how to install the officers in every kind of a lodge, from the Sublime Cheshire Cats to the Oriental Oligarchical Order of Oboes.

Yes, there are men built for office. And, when you find one, he somehow seems early to be aware of it. No tardy constituency is permitted to keep him back. Ever genial, a good handshaker, ready of approval, he gravitates to the throne. If he can't anything better he'll take Illustrious Outside Snow-shoveler—so long as it is illustrious.

The typical officeholder weighs over 230 pounds, most of the weight below the chin. The larger his waist measure the greater his need of office. He will have a red face and features like the mild and reminiscent Hereford. Early in life, he begins to "belong." All orders thrust honors on him so as to get him through quick and out of the way, for they know he must have them. After he has gone through he declines to get through. Everything in the Illustrious Secret Caduza knows him. When he isn't Illustrious, he is driving a hack.

I have been an office-holder.

Once I installed officers of a secret body. It was winter. The stove glimmered fitfully, and the jewels about my neck froze the marrow in the spinal column.

"We are about to proceed to the installation, to be performed by our eminent friend and visitor, the Supreme District Deputy Grand Hypothenuse, whom now I present to you," said the presiding officer.

"My friends," said I, "I am—that is, I was, and I daresay you will agree with me. It is not often that I am, I am sure. If it were a fact, I am convinced that you would. In short, if we take it seriatim, we shall discover that it is as I said. The session is open, and if the Interlocutor will hit the man on his right with the gavel and will pass me the constitution I will serve it, and if any lady or gent would like a second piece, he may have it. Ice-cream will also be found in the ante-room."

Some called it "suspension of mental equilibrium." But I knew differently. It was due to mixing up the pages of my address—part lodge work, part report of a nigger minstrel show.

But it convinced me. I never was born to the pot-hat. No Imperial Potentate in mine. A true son of the Purple Cross would have made that speech without a falter and would have made it moving and sublime instead of ridiculous, as did I. Of what concern to him are the words? Mere nothings! Vain symbols. It's the Voice! the Gesture! the Presence!! Yea, the very Girth of the Abdomen.

So there be them that wear the puppet crown!
And there be them that stand aside and watch!

And there be them, also, that rejoice with them who pull out the toys and play awhile and put them back without a tear after the play is over!

ON "THE COW"



THE COW does not resemble the pump; although there once was confusion, on this point, before the discovery of butter-fat. The cow has four legs and the pump has only one. The subsequent leg of the cow on the right hand side is elastic and can reach farther than the arm of the law. The cow also has a tail with a fly-slapper on the end of it. This she uses to wrap around the neck of the freckled milkman and hold him while she kicks his union suit off of him.

A cow is always associated with cold weather, in my mind, because I never seem to remember milking a cow when it was warm weather. Sitting on a cold milk stool, on the port side of a cow, in a frosty morning, and extracting the milk in frosty streams, is as far from interpreting Tennyson as anything I ever did. Mephistopheles had horns and a tail. The only thing he has on the cow is that he did not give milk. And Mephistopheles generally lived in a warmer climate. If you ever milked a cow in below-zero weather you know that you had to be tender to the cow. If there is a Hell, there will be cows to milk in it, in winter. I prefer some other job, in Heaven.

There is a tradition that the cow is a mild and gentle beast of absolutely moral conviction and general ascetic practice. I have my doubt. The cow is a natural born thief. She rather steal than eat. She rather go out and eat Monday's washing than feed on clover. You give a cow the slightest chance to accumulate the education and she will unbutton the lock on a six-barred gate and eat all of the green peas before you can put on your cowhides and get there preparatory to giving her a kick in the rump. I have seen more agile farmers chasing cows than I ever saw

chasing reform. I have seen my grandfather leap over the wood-pile; scale a ten-foot barnyard fence; shoot the rapids of the babbling brook; shin an elm tree that skirted the meadow and run forty yards in four seconds to drive the cow out of the strawberry patch, all of the while roaring like a steam siren and using language that would have kept him in the seats of the anxious at the protracted meeting, if I had been inclined to tell on him.

No! I do not believe that the morals of the cow are any better than those of some profiteers. She lacks sympathy. She needs altogether too much attention. What the next generation needs is a breed of cows that will walk into the dairy; back up to the milk pail and release the milk without urging. We want an automatic, self-milking, patent cow. The present style is old-fashioned—very antiquated. All of this present race of non-self-starting cows ought to be killed and sent to the saw mill and sawed up into veal. I know that there are some men who love cows and I suppose they inherit it. It is lucky that it is so; there are some men who take to lion-taming.

I always tell a story of Sim Haskell at this point. I have told it twice before in these writings, but it is too good to leave out now. He visited a neighbor who had a cow in the stall. Alongside of the cow were many clubs, broken pitchfork handles and other signs of disturbance, while the cow's hide was so full of pitchfork holes that it looked like a colander. The cow's owner came along and looked at the cow. "I don't suppose, Mr. Haskell," said he, "that anybody but me could get along with that cow."

A cow always knows when a boy is dressed up and ready to go to the lyceum. At least the old-fashioned cow did. She would look around at the boy, with his clean paper-collar and his red necktie and seem to say "Ha! Ha! sonny, I perceive." And when the

milking was nearly done and the calm of the evening was coming down and not a sound disturbed the sacred stillness of the spot, she would extend her right hind foot with a circular movement that covered more than two acres, swish her tail, hump her back; step in the milk-pail; heave a sigh that sent her left rump-bone up into the haymow and come down on the wreck of a type of manly beauty that would have made Apollo weep. I have seen boys emerge from one of these bovine upheavals looking worse than a tramp. I have seen a boy reach up and batter a milk pail on the snout of a cow and wallop the rear guard of a grade Hereford beastie with tears in his eyes and holes in his best suit.

I recognize the value of cow's milk—altho I never use it. I recognize the dependence of the race, on cows I like them abstractedly. But I have associated with them intimately all I ever care to do. And I don't care who knows it.

ON "SPRING IN CITIES"



T COMES around the corner, suddenly, like a romping child and catches a town in furs and great coats. Only the shops seem to have been aware of it and these are gay with fashions that are half-naked, as tho it were mid-summer that they expected, not spring

with woolen underwear beneath its tunic and its smile. Shameless are the shops; with fashions quite nude, like Aphrodite of Pierre Louys, or stories in French in Pierre Mille. Under scarlet lamps, under amber and jade and emerald, they lie in wait for Spring and Eve, as tho this were the Garden and the Serpent were not numb with a winter's cold. Bare, very bare will Eve be this summer if these be fashions, and her

in Boston it is "Fashion Week," so called. Poor child! Nothing but spangles and suggestions to cover her nakedness. Yet she seems enraptured and with her sisters stands fifty deep, exclaiming "Ah!" and "Oh!" at these dresses; at the trifles called "lingerie" and at these exhibits of hosiery and these flaunting feathers that pretend to have been the tail-feathers of birds of exotic plumage.

It was in Washington, earlier in the week, that spring first suggested itself to me. There had been Saturday and Sunday when all the chimneys of Boston blew down, when traffic ceased from the snow-blizzard, when grocers declined to deliver even the beans, when the codfish was more sacred than usual because untouched of human hands, and here a day later, Monday, in Washington, it was a picture of sunshine on bare pavements and the Stars and Stripes over the Capitol, rippling in the strong white light of March. Somehow, a new note crept into life! It was as tho, after all, another dawn were at hand, another year were in the spring and all were well with the world! There were songs of early birds in the parks; signs of spring bonnets on the pave and symptoms of open cars in the traffic. One felt that perhaps there might be resurrections hereabout, "a touch of Edens long forgot" even tho the white-throat sparrow's song was not louder than the debate on the League of Nations. Yet even the winter of that discontent seems to be passing and the few weary senators on the democratic side who cling to the Wilsonian apron-strings, seem to find hope of Spring in the steady onward march of reservation after reservation.

Back here in Boston Wednesday! And Spring seems to have come up with us, out of the South, even with the Federal Express. It comes, in town, differently from what it comes in the country. Here, the spring comes first in the raiment; there, in the appear-

ance of the folk, whereas Spring in the country comes first out of doors and never in the raiment of the country folk. In our New England rural life, Spring says "I am here" first in the little song the South wind sings on the sunny side of the house, in the honey-combing of snow-drifts; in the bluer sky and in a languor of early March. We, ourselves, respond but slowly, quite patient, having little to do; no fashions to follow; no Spring garments to don.

But in the city the worldly ones first say "It is Spring." And such blossoms! Every flower of the field is in the shops; the violets lie in banks of blue; the jonquils in their yellow gold; the pale narcissi; the buttercup and the marguerites and sweet peas until you can smell them thru the window-panes. The corners of the street, out of the winds, are gay with flowers on the stands; the hurdy-gurdy throbs in the distance; the streets are thronged with folk; the men are out of furs and ulsters and sporting light top-coats and boutonnieres; the shops—but I have said—how gay! And Boston Common begins to stick its head up thru the snow and the Common cross-walks to be traveled; and thin patches of water to show upon the pond and the birds are flocking.

I have lingered much today here, idly, watching Spring. She is an old friend and growing older but not less lovely. I find peculiar satisfaction in a more distant regard than usual. One Spring, more or less, interests me little, nowadays. Thus regarding it, negatively, one can rejoice in the peculiarly responsive welcome that cities give to it. They know nothing of the great panorama that our New England hills are to show this year above all others; the mad rush of waters along our great Maine rivers from this unusual body of snow; the way the brooks break their seals; the way birds come and the beavers come out; and the wood-chuck emerges and life stirs at root of the leaf of grass.

All they know is—something has come to the human heart much as we know that it cometh to the hills. And here today about me it shows, in these shop windows that beat all the colors of the rainbow by about ten thousand tints; in the smiles on the faces of the folk in the first touch of that Presence which spells resurrection and reviving of the world.

It is an old story, but yet rather new, if we but think so. It would be a very sad and unfair world to some of us, if this Spring in Town as well as in Country did not indicate a very general and specific plan, a mightier Springtime than even this—one yet to come, that will waken even the poor shriveled hearts and worn bodies from which long since we have thought all earthly sense of Spring itself, had gone. The spirit quickeneth—yea! the spirit of Spring.

ON "'TAIN'T THE PIP AN' 'TAIN'T THE FLU!"



IN'T FELT RIGHT fer a week er two; sorter cranky, restless an' blue; don't do nothin' I oughter do; ain't got the pip an' ain't got the flu; jest feel sad an' sometimes mad an' then agin, all-fired bad.

Food don't taste just zactly right; toss around a lot at night; don't want'er set still an' don't want'er walk; don't want'er read an' don't want'er talk; hate ter be erlone; an' then agin, don't want no neighbors comin' in! Set there! Nothin' I want'er do; ain't got the pip an' ain't got the flu.

What's the matter, I can't see; jest ez restless ez I kin be. Ain't got no int'rest left in me; nothin' I'd give a rap ter see; ain't got no fever; heat ain't riz. Ain't got no rheumatiz. Back don't ache; ain't got no

cough; nothin' thet's likely ter take me off; jest set here, don't want'er do a gol-dern thing I'm useter do; don't want'er read; don't want'er talk; can't set still an' don't want'er walk; jest set right here an' feel so blue; ain't got the pip an' ain't got the flu.

Seem's ter me if the geese ud come, I'd feel some better; I would, by snum. Ef I could only hear a crow, pr'aps 'twould help the feelin' go. Mebbe that's the matter with me; world ain't no wise onery, when the soft wind drips the eaves an' the trees put out their leaves. Mebbe what I want for mine, ain't nothin' in the doctor's line; but jest sumthin' on the wing; sumthin' that can flit an' sing; ice a-breakin', brooks that rair; mists a-risin' over there; mountains far-off standin' blue, jest like as they useter do; bees a-hummin' soft an' low; winds that loaf erlong, you know; brown spots bigger than your hand, showin' on your pastur-land. Sa-a-a-y! I reckon that ud do; hain't got no pip! Hain't got no flu!

Mebbe I could crack a smile, ef I could go an' fish erwhile; an' loaf a day by a laffin' stream an' set an' whistle an' stretch an' dream, an' think an' larf an' roll an' smoke an' never do a gol darn stroke, an' smell the vi-lets in the grass, an' hear the wild birds as they pass, an' hear the voices of the trees, an' wash my whiskers in the breeze, an' see the red fox gaze erbout an' ketch a glimpse of the woodchuck's snout, an' watch the clouds as my old pipe curls an' cast a fly where the water whirls, an' be ez lazy, fat an' free as a yaller-striped bumblebee.

Hain't got no pip an' hain't got no flu! All I need is a day er two far away from the haunts of men, where I kin be a boy agen. Winter is an awful drain, on a feller's fishin'-brain. Makes a feller sorter pine fer the wettin' of a line; drefful weary here erbout, when he thinks of jumpin' trout; seems as tho this very thing came ter me erlong last spring; felt right mean fer a

day er two; awful sollum, sad an' blue, 'twan't the pip and t'wan't the flu; jest that restless-like an' mean longin' fer a larfin' stream. Gosh! I guess I'll turn erbout an' go an' git my tackle out! Glad I know jest what ter do. 'Tain't the pip an' 'tain't the flu.

ON "FATHER"



H FATHER, how can you!" How many a dad has heard this as he has come down stairs, dolled in his best to attend some family function and has met the mild reproof of a daughter's voice and eyes at his get-up.

Father straightens up; recalls the time when he was considered something of a good looker and then goes over and looks at himself in the glass. He is bald-headed, perhaps! Possibly he has a bunch of whiskers under his chin that waggle when he talks. His best suit is a Prince Albert cut out with a circular saw by a man who fell at the first battle of Bull Run. He has a green and red necktie that his wife gave him at Christmas. He has a soft collar that the store-keeper told him "they were all wearing nowadays," but which he found it difficult to manipulate into a smooth and fine appearance. He has calloused places on his hands. His left toe is enlarged where the hammer fell on it last summer. He has a touch of Riggs disease and his front teeth are not so firmly fixed as once they were. He notices it when he eats green corn. Gladys says to Lucy, "Isn't popper a sight? I do wish he would dress better. What will George think of him?" But Dad has done his best—his very best, he cannot possibly look any better. If he looks as well as "George" he would have to buy a nipped-in coat and a

pair of tight trousers and wear a belt, and Father's pants will not stay up at the bidding of a belt.

Father is not long on conversation nowadays. He used to be when he could talk about the War of the Rebellion. But now that is denied to him. So father goes thru the evening and gets up in the morning, boils an egg and goes away to work. In the shop or the factory he loses himself with a lot of other "papas" who are keeping the high-priced wolf out of the limousine and figuring on how to buy squirrel coats for Gladyses. He eats dinner from a pail between his knees or blows himself to an Irish stew at the restaurant. Then he takes two whiffs of his pipe for dessert. After work, he goes home; sifts the ashes and in winter, tends the furnace, wheels in the wood, brings in the clothes-reel, lugs out the waste and makes himself as useful as possible while Gladys plays the piano. He gets into a corner of the rear room and reads his paper and considers the Treaty of Peace. He then fixes up the house for the night and if there is a noise in the night he gets a kick in the back with orders to go down and see what has happened. If a baby cries he has to get up and hunt carpet-tacks, and if anyone goes for the doctor, it is Dad. When there is discussion of the future of the family it seems to be up to Dad to provide it, and when there are recriminations for the past, it is Dad who is the Angora. He has his fun when he dresses up to go to the Lodge and when there is a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce where his shrewd observations are perhaps respected; but at home he sits way back and reflects that in parsing the word "door-mat," the gender is male.

Yes—I am pleading merely for the "unconsidered" father now—(accent on the adjective) the world being full of them, going along as patient, weary men bearing burdens happily and not apparently objects of beauty or of adornment—just plain, old-fashioned

knobby, rough, out-of-style codgers who work away and wait for nothing much except the winter and the summer, the bud and the autumn leaf, the dawn and the sunset, enduring to the day that they climb the hill for the last time with a dim notion that the household will some day be rather lonesome without the old man, after all. And then, suddenly, he kicks in, winds up, does his last stroke.

Fold his hands over his breast; brush the sparse locks from his brow; take a look into the faded eyes; deck him in his Prince Albert; tell the Lodge; send for the sister whom he has not seen for twenty years; summon the brothers—queer-looking old codgers, stiff and dry-eyed and full of memories; notify the newspaper and be sorry that you do not know the exact date of his birth or the exact name of his parents; he has done his bit; he has done his best; he has lived frugally and faithfully and he has passed on and will get a hoarse reading of the twenty-third psalm, by a minister who is in a hurry to be off to another funeral.

Well—I don't know. Maybe this is a bit overdrawn; but I have known a lot of such unconsidered dads. Plain everyday, hard-working, faithful fathers. I wonder is there a special heaven for them over beyond, where they can get a little of what they have not gotten in this world—the perfume of applause, the fragrance of adulation, the joys of flattery, the comfort of being a member of the heavenly household. Will these unconsidered dads have those about them in the next world who will flit about and sing sweet songs of love to them? I wonder!

ON "BOYS WHO WORK"



COMING over to work the other morning at about 7.15 A.M., I noticed a nice-looking, red-cheeked boy of about eighteen working with street crews in Auburn. He was handling an eighteen pound pick and digging away the ice on the shady side of the street in the cool of the March morning. He wore a High School sweater and a little round skating cap. Anyone could see that he was a regular boy, well-read and full of determination.

Said I to myself, "Here is a regular old-fashioned boy who is not ashamed of honest work."

A little later by accident I found out who the boy is—fine family, well-to-do, scholar in the schools; who came home one day and said: "Dad, I've got a job for vacation. Boss has taken me onto the streets. I'm not going to loaf my vacation away uselessly. Every dollar I get helps me on toward college."

His father told me that and he, too, was not ashamed of the boy or his job—ashamed! God forbid! Inasmuch as the father is a regular American six-footer who has plowed his own way, he was as proud as a pea hen with a flock of pullets. He couldn't help grinning all over his face about the boy. I, too, was proud of him. A boy among a million, I do believe! The father and I chuckled a while over the boy; but Dad won't say much to the boy about it. Why should he? It's up to the boy and he is doing nothing that is worth making a fuss over. He is just being a manly lad—unashamed of honest toil!

What am I talking about? Nothing but work. That's all—that obsolete thing—for many boys at least—work! Mollycoddling laws and fussbudgeting rules about work for boys has driven home the notion that toil is a disgrace for the boy who can possibly

avoid it and whose "old man" is a meal ticket and a good easy mark for flapdoodle coats split up the back to the collar and a bunch of "Lucky Strikes" per diem. I can see them, every day, many of them too all-fired lazy to walk across the river from Auburn to go to the afternoon movies and needs must board the trolley for a seven-cent ride that would require about four minutes of the walking that their royal highnesses cannot endure. And so they board a street car for a three-hundred yard ride and while away the vacations in the movies. If they condescend to ask for a position and nothing less than 80 cents an hour with double time and time and a half and all the perquisites of the fifteen minutes lee-way for the wash-up and the late-in.

Am I wrong? I want to be shown to the contrary; for such is the experience in a hundred instances within my immediate purview. I doubt the value of modern mollycoddling and allowance system of bringing up youth of both sexes. I doubt the introduction of childhood to the easy money road of spendthrift ways. A few days ago a boy confessed in a Lewiston office to a theft of money which he said was brought about by going "with too swift a gang." Eats, sodas, ice-creams, car-rides, movies—all of them had eaten into his allowance of \$2.00 a week and he stole a lot of money to make good.

Old-fashioned dads had no such experiences. Nobody ever gave me five dollars in the whole experience of my boyhood and I never owned a five dollar bill until, aged sixteen, I earned it teaching school in a country district at \$5 a week—no, \$20 a month—and board. And I was then going to college and paying my own way and carrying my grub in my pocket. We old-fashioned boys knew about money because we had to earn it. We knew what enjoyment there was in accomplishment; not in indulgence. I rather be a pot-wal-loper in a restaurant, a dump-cleaner in a dark alley,

a scavenger in a slaughter-house and earn money, than grow up to expect some one to hand it out to me and never know what earning it really meant.

That's the trouble with modern education. It has been easy to entice boys to work of late at around \$9 a week because it was fashionable and supposed to be "winning the war"; but when you see a real boy digging in the ditch and making frescoes on the paving with a six-foot hoe and yarding with the adult laborer, you see something that is worth while and that speaks for hope in the rising generation, after all. Give us fewer tin-horn dudes and more lads with a purpose!

ON "A NEW HAT"



IN THE FALL of 1879 I had to have a new hat. When a boy had to have a hat in 1879, bet your life he HAD to have it. They were not throwing money around in those days.

I had to get my hats of a man who owed my folks money. That was all there was to it—no other way for me to get a new lid. This particular merchant did not rank as the leading hatter. He kept good cowhide boots; good substantial women's serge boots (I mean good substantial serge shoes for women—the kind that went with elastics in the side, so becoming when the wind blew); perfectly reliable and fashionable salt-pork; just as good corn-poppers as anyone else, but his hats were distinctly a side-line.

He kept them behind the stove in about five boxes. He SAID they were all of the latest New York style. He said this sadly, as tho it were a dangerous admission. He told me not to mention it, or it might hurt his credit to have it known that he went it wild in that sort of way. He used to take me out back where they

sold salt-fish and swear me not to reveal that he was buying his hats of "leading New York hatters."

Said he: "And I want you to know what I have never told anyone else. I wouldn't have anyone else know this for fifty dollars. But you will understand this because you are going to college. This hat, that I am going to show you, has a genu-ine cigar-roll brim. What do you say to that?"

I will never forget that hat—and I say "that hat" because it was the only hat he had that fitted me, and the only "genuine cigar roll brim," I believe, that ever was made. There never was any need to make another. All his other derbies were either six and a half or eleven and three-eighths. He evidently bought only for the abnormal. It had a bellowing crown, taller than the crown of any hat that has ever been made elsewhere in the world. And its cigar-roll brim was faced with the shiniest of black satin. The dealer would take it out of the box; dust it with a silk handkerchief; take it out doors to remove imaginery flecks of lint from it and bring it in and place it on my head and I would feel as tho a brick block had suddenly dropped on me. If I remember aright, I weighed 102 lbs. and was a shrinking lad, of small stature, and that hat stood up over eleven feet, comparatively. It had the shiniest sweat-band (singular that I have never forgotten that feature) and a lot of gilt letters in it declaring that it was made by "The Hatter to the King." I can't remember what king; but it was probably King Canute.

And it did not seem to fit—exactly; altho the clerk said it did and everyone else in the shop said so, too. There seemed to be an extra vacant room front and back and it seemed to impinge solely over my ears. But it had a cigar-roll brim. It's two-point bearing made it alternately tangle up in my coat collar and shut out the sight of my eyes. When I walked it

bobbed, back and front, like the walking beam of an engine—but it had a cigar-roll brim. And I had to take it. I tried it on over four hundred times, in one week; but Topsham Fair was coming and a girl I knew coming; and I knew that Fate fixed it for me to wear that hat or none. I did wear it home—by the back streets, and when mother saw me she stood aghast and said: “Why! why! Sonny!” and then seeing my gathering tears and knowing my cares over the hat, she desisted. She was a kind, good mother and she knew!

If I should live to rival Methuselah and gradually lose my memory year by year, I should still remember that day at Topsham Fair. I was the cynosure of all eyes. Every time I saw anyone looking at me, the hat swelled up about a foot, and along about noon, it was ninety feet tall. That shiny, cigar-roll brim gleamed in the October sunlight like the diamonds of the side-show barkers. The day was hot and the hat accumulated weight with every hour. The heat made it gradually conform to my head and caused it to sink gradually and bend my ears out at right angles and finally to engulf my countenance. I noticed my girl regarding my disappearance with apprehension; but she was a game sport and said nothing—possibly regarding it either as correct or an optical illusion. At 3 P.M. the hat was around my chin and I was eclipsed. Such a day! Most of the time I wore the hat in my hand and looked at the insides. I don’t want to make this story stronger than it was—I couldn’t anyway.

That night late, I went home and put the hat away. The episode was over. I had worn the original cigar-roll brim. After this, plain goods for me! No more would I seek the rewards of extreme style! Simple ways for mine. I had learned my lesson. I have never forgotten it. The next day I took the hat back and passed it over saying it “didn’t fit.” The salesman looked at me sadly. Taking the shiny brim in his hand

he put it back in the box. "Too darn bad," said he. "Nobby hat on yer! Reg'lar cigar-roll brim, you know! Everybody is wearin' 'em! Latest—!" But I fled, and the next week bought a second-hand hat from a class mate for 25 cents. And it wasn't bigger than a postage-stamp.

ON "THE SPIRIT OF RETURNING"



IF THERE is anything profoundly beautiful in life it is returning—the spirit of it, I mean. It is the story not only of the prodigal son, but also of those not prodigals. It is steeped in restfulness, the balance against waywardness, the end of wanderings—the return.

They say that all life is rhythmic,—a swinging out, a return to the old base and just a bit of progress thereby; then a second setting forth; again the return and again a step ahead. It is so with our personal lives. We seem to go away that we may return and know the bliss of getting back again to the fireside. To go forth gladly in the morning of a journey; to experience all of the adventure of the way; to feel no regret for the things we left behind; to meet new faces and make new friends—all very well, but when the weary hours come and we turn our faces backward to the old home, when the glory of the dying day shines on unfamiliar hills and we miss the sounds of eventide in old places, then, with what eagerness we hasten to the returning and, standing again on familiar thresholds, find the peace that passeth understanding in this world below. We have tried novelty and found it good. But we are "home again" and that is better than all else.

The sense of return fills all life. It is one of the most persistent of our emotions. It is concerned in

Nature. It is identified with religion and a symbol of creation. We are waiting now for autumn. It is sure to return. The spirit of returning is even now upon it. It went away last year to travel in many lands and stayed not longer here than the first snows of winter. It has its face turned this way already. It has sent its forerunners, in golden gleams along the way-side, in the falling leaves of the white maple. It has its fingers on the pulse of summer. It is staying the burden of the heat. It is on its way. If it did not return, how desolate this northern land! What pain and anguish to us who long for the sweet spirit of Autumn in the fields and pastures, along the mountain ponds, in the drum of the partridge and the flight of the migratory bird. We love August, we wait September!

What would we do if the spirit of returning did not reside in all nature? What if the year ever came when seasons did not roll; when evening sunsets failed to return and dawn did not follow after? What of a world in which there was never any repetition; always new and bizarre effects, no regularity and no consequence? It would be like going way from home and never returning—no peace of mind, no calm of spirit, no welcome at the threshold.

We come into the world as children—we return to the earth as children and we are promised that only as children shall we enter into heaven. It is a cycle. All things—even journeys—are cycles. We see the tree put forth its leaves and the leaves return to the ground. We see the tree stand proudly aloft and then fall, when its days are finished, and again mingle with the earth. It is so with man. And it is all a matter of completing cycles—of returning home; the same for the tree; same for the season; the same for the water that falls from the sky in rain or snow again to be caught up to heaven again to fall. It is called death; but it is doubtful if it is more than a returning and ever a returning again.

and again, in new form and new matter, but with the impulse of the soul and the will of God ever behind it. We talk a good deal in disparagement of death; but it is not to be disparaged. It is as beautiful as birth. It is not unnatural—remember that! It is no wrench of systems and methods. It came with birth and it endures with it. If it were a cataclysm of nature it would be different; but it has a brother in sleep and it has a kin in all returnings and in all new seedlings of plant, tree and flower, in all returns of season, sunrise, sunset, stars, moon, planets and in the infinite circlings of all space.

We have seen this week the passing of an old man—loved and revered, in this community. He returns home—that is all. So do you and so I in good season. Why fret your days here? Why worry over the inevitable turning of your face homeward—you must sleep somewhere tonight and somewhere, thru the ages. Why seek ever to go on and on—you do not do it of a journey—the hour comes when the old fireside tugs and the cares of home seem sweet! Why not look thus on life? It is in perfect analogy; for you have been long away from home and it is time to turn the face that way, if you have passed the meridian of life. It is a dear dim goal—happy if you may see its welcome gates afar. You must return—that is all!

ON "STONE WALLS"



OMEHOW as I think of stone walls, I think of woodchucks and flavored days of summer when the perfumes of the hayfield floated over the sunshot world and the bees sang and the birds almost flew in our faces and the dog barked neck-deep from the mat of trailing vines over the old stone wall.

To be on a hill-top abreast a stone wall, looking off there to some winding stream, off here to the smoke of the town, off beyond to the dear roofs and chimneys of the place of abode and yet to be digging out a woodchuck under a stone fence make for idylls that no king ever bettered. To be boy or girl and woodchuck and stone wall and summer! What more need one dream about, even if he be as great as a king or even as potential as a walking delegate. *Anima pellegrina!* Pilgrim souls that will not stay by the fireside; that will not be content to live in wage-scales and creature comfort, come out and sit by the old stone wall that winds away and away over the hills and down in the valleys and over the brook and into the stump fence and so on across the world. And wander with it where you will.

I recall this about the old stone wall of the New Englander that lives in even this latter day abundantly and makes the picturesqueness of many a landscape, that it was made by honest work, not by Wednesday and Saturdays off and forty-one hours a week and a grasshopper socialism, that intends to make leisure the god and work the curse of the ages. It was built—was this winding wall of ours—by men and women who saw sweetness in accomplishment and recognized in hey-day, happy, *l'allegro* days nothing more than opportunity for better work under more favorable circumstances, for the day would come when the snow would blow over these hills and the stones of the field

would be buried deep, and the drifts would pile where now the briars run and the wild vine blossoms. So I sit here on the old stone wall and see the armies of the toilers of our fathers and our fathers' fathers households in the long ago, singing, swinging on this man's job—and all for us. What are we doing for our coming sons and daughters that is more abiding than cleared land and stone-walls? I sit here and see an elder race that did not estimate life as an easy job. I sit here and see as did Walt Whitman, "Victory, union, faith, identity, time, the indissoluble compacts, riches, mystery, eternal progress, the cosmos and the modern reports." Do you understand that! And do you see how it might all have come from building an old stone wall. Oh, blind ones who esteem the easy job. Victory was learned in accomplishment and then all the rest came after. No artist, no singer, no writer, no statesman, no business manager, no workman, no pioneer, no inventor ever did anything honestly and faithfully and reared any abiding thing that he did not something for these eleven attributes of life. No man ever shirked the job; cheated the time-book, proved traitor to the contract, who did not thereby deny his Maker and do defiance to that law which declares that life is a succession of men—each doing his duty.

The woodchuck still burrows under the old stone wall. Man builds them no more; for lands are cleared and the stone is rejected of the builder. He lives—does the woodchuck, as the briar runs, as the bird carols, as the artist sings, as the writer writes—to fulfil some divine law. The wall runs away and I turn from discursive things to contemplate their sheer beauty. I love them especially along the barren pastures near the sea. I know of nothing more absolutely simple in its pure artistry than a stone wall rising over seaside pasture knoll within close proximity to waves. To look at them undulating in the hollows and then

lifting over the tops of hills and sweeping on to dip their noses in the sea, is worth while. There are some few things like this, rather ugly on close inspection but lovely in the entirety and fitness that move folk to dream and perhaps to have that warm and "comfy" feeling in the "little insides" that seeing beautiful things out-of-doors always gives one.

So—without much continuity, I introduce you to the stone wall as to an inheritance of our fathers. It goes with fan-shaped windows of colonial homes; with buds, briars, woodchucks, brooks, books and sermons but not with cabaret or limousine or pool-rooms or pleasure as sole end of life.

ON "MAKING THE BEST OF THINGS"



MAN named William McQuigg fell down the shaft of a mine and lay there three days. He was taken up alive but paralyzed from the waist down. He was taken to a hospital for incurables in Chicago and was there two years. He could use his head, hands and arms—especially his head.

In some way, he realized \$300 out of his past belongings, as a miner, and when this had come to hand he informed the hospital officials that he was about to leave them. No man with his brains was incurable, in the full sense of the term. He accordingly devised a small bed with wheels on which he could lie and which he could propel with his arms and hands. He was taken from the hospital and set upon the streets to begin again the life of an active man.

His first business move was to lease a store and

start a small printing and stationery business. He did well. He attracted attention by his cheerfulness and optimism. They were his best stock-in-trade as they are any man's best business assets. He became forehanded. He owned his automobile which was made especially for his needs, with a bed in it. In this he went everywhere, doing business and enjoying all that nature and the sight of man can combine to offer.

We have an example of the highest possible inspiration right here in Lewiston, of a young man who, in the fullness of his strength as a boy, was accidentally shot, damaging the spinal cord. He is doing business, cheerfully, with never a complaint, driving his own automobile under physical conditions that in a less determined character might keep him bed-ridden, away from all that a man holds dear. One never sees him but with a prayer for his renewing strength and a blessing on him for his example.

It's a big thing to make the best of things. Half a man is better than no man at all. A man's brain is ninety per cent. of his anatomy. He can get along without legs and arms and other minor organs if he has his dynamic brain going. It is hard to be crippled—but there are worse things. And the cheerful man, who shows to the world the aspect of a fellow-worker under adverse circumstances, is positively an inspiration. He shames the idler. It puts the rich man's dissipated and non-productive life into the discard of vain and wicked things when one contemplates this patient soldier of industry, toiling away, like William McQuigg, happy to do his share.

We are soon going to see many a man, badly damaged from the war. They will be coming home blinded, without feet and hands, paralyzed and helpless. But not one of them as true soldiers will fail to make the best of it—to do something to keep a place in the ranks of workers.

But how about the rest of us? Are our belly-aches and our indispositions and our nervous prosperities, and our follies and our foibles to continue to make excuses for laziness?

Wake up! There's a new day abroad, in which every man shall work and work all over. And if he is short an arm or a leg or toe, what is left will wiggle on and there will be no such name as "crippled" or incurable.

Wake! for the day calleth!

ON "THE VOICE OF THE FROG"



AM straining my ear to hear the first croak of the frog. Somehow, it rests me from the contemplation of turmoil, to think of something sempiternal, like spring and signs of spring. The more you think of God and His works and the less you worry over German hellishness the better, I think. Think more, therefore, of spring, frogs and tortoises.

I don't know much of Nature except in the sentimental way. I did not know—until I looked it up—that the wood-tortoise is the *Emys insculpta*. I have heard him a little farther south in New England, after the mud of the freshets has dried on the fallen leaf in the swamp, as he moves, rustling in the leaves or tumbling over the bank. I don't know which birds come first, but some day I see a bird that I recognize as a fat rascal of a robin and I know him because my mother used to say "O, see the robin redbreast," and I said that same to my children. All the children that came to my house were as mine. I don't know which

trees come into leaf first. I only know that there is a breath of something new and vital in the air, like a presage of God on earth and then there is glory in the filtered light thru foliage. All leaves are alike to me.

But the frog is different. Every time I hear him first, I feel youth stir my blood in remembrance and visions of old places and old faces return to me. I see the old house and the old hill and the old frog-pond and the old bonfires blazing on the hill and the old row of bowls where we played duck and drake. I was pleased to know this day that someone else liked the frog in something the same way.

That other one was Thoreau. Frogs held his contrite admiration. "The same starry geometry looks down on their active and their torpid state," says he. "The little peeping hyla winds his shrill mellow miniature flageolet in the warm, overflowed pools and suggests to him this stupendous image. 'It was like the light, reflected from the mountain ridges within the shaded portions of the moon, forerunner and herald of the spring.' " Thoreau made a regular business, studying the frogs—waded for them with freezing calves, in the early freshet, caught them and carried them home to hear their sage songs. "I paddle up the river to see the moonlight and hear the bull-frog," says he. About May 22, he hears the willowy music of the frog, and notices the pads on the river with often a scalloped edge like those tin platters on which the country people sometimes bake turnovers. He says of the wood-frog, *Rana sylvatica*, "It had four or five dusky bars which matched exactly when the legs were folded, showing that the painter applied his brush to the animal when it was in that position." The leopard-frog, the marsh-frog, the bull-frog and best of all earthly singers, the toad he never could do enough for. It was, he says, a great discovery, when first he found that the ineffable trilling concerto of early summer after

sunset was arranged by the toads—when the earth seemed fairly to stream with the sound. He thought that the yellow, swelling throat of the bull-frog came with the water-lilies.

Is it not some satisfaction to think that toads and frogs will go on and on and on, singing—after the Hohenzollerns and such small fry are dead and gone? Is it not some comfort that flowers may spring up again in No Man's Land? Is it not pleasant to think that tho Rheims is gone—the elm tree can fling aloft a beauty never matched by cathedral spire?

Be of courage! Spring will yet come into the heart of humankind!

ON "THE FAIR AVERAGE OF WICKEDNESS"



WAS OUT on the Union Pacific, one time, somewhere west of Omaha," said Charles S. Cummings of Auburn, "with no berth in the sleeper. I happened by chance to meet a miner, whom I had seen a few days before, and he gave me half of his. The car was crowded; baggage in the aisles; children crying; women tired and fussy. My friend couldn't sleep, so he got up in the night and went to the smoking room for a whiff. He fell over baggage and had a hard trip.

"In the morning he said to me, 'What is your business?' "

" 'I am a clergyman,' said I.

" 'My word,' said he, 'You must be shocked. I swore terribly, didn't I?' "

" 'Yes,' said I, 'You did swear a lot when you fell down, but I prayed a lot while you swore, and thus kept up a fair average for both of us.' "

I think that a good many people forget that the world runs by averages. It is hard to get one hundred

per cent efficiency either in praying or swearing. It is fair to suppose that swearing has its uses, by way of emphasis and relief of nervous strain. Bad habit? Sure thing! Unnecessary? Sure thing! Ought to be stopped? Sure thing! Let's condemn humanity for swearing, therefore; let's—let's thunder against it in the press; let's fine and imprison and classify as wicked and altogether base, such persons as are profane—what do you say to that? I say, "No. Let's pray a little ourselves and raise the average." Let's look at the world as one of fair average of wickedness and errors and let's try to raise that average by doing right ourselves and not paying too much attention to our neighbor's misdoing. If we all do that, we will have no bad neighbors. They will all be as perfect as we are. And won't that be lovely!

Now I don't want any good Christian person to write me—many people have been writing me—and say that this signifies a plea for profanity. I don't mean anything like that. The bad is bad; but we don't want to be looking at the bad too much. We should remember that dirt collects even in our own houses. Let's keep them clean and forget it. It is a penalty of living in an imperfect world. We will do better to believe in the cleanly part of humanity and look for it. Many people spend all their lives bemoaning the evil that other people do. Ninety-nine per cent of it is a part of some great evolution of God. A few years ago we growled at the evil men were doing in slavery. We had a great war to free our land from it. The results are felt in this war. The evil stood big in our eyes. It beclouded man's vision. It blinded him to the love of home, the traditions of friendliness, the desires that were in the Southern heart. We went to work and fought and prayed and we raised the average. Those people were not to be classified as wicked altogether. God was using them to bring about a great ethical and

religious lesson to the world. If we could only take folks on the average and not condemn them wholly when they should be condemned only in part, we would get along faster.

So I say that what we need in the discussion of current topics in which apparent wrong meets our eye is a greater measure of that message of the Master, "Judge not; that ye be not judged" and in the spirit of David's appeal to judge the world "in righteousness." In other words we must let facts talk instead of passions and prejudices and unfounded inferences as to the altogether wickedness of those whom we criticise. For; I do not believe that there is any person in whom there is not good. I do believe that there is a fair average of good in a great average of the world. What we have to do is to forget the classification—attack the wrong, leave out the personality and by prayer and fight correct the error and raise the average of the world to another notch.

ON "IT COSTS BUT TWO CENTS"



WE FIND a good many people who think that a newspaper costs two cents.

So, too, there's a good many people who think that the pew-rent is ten dollars a year.

One is about as near right as the other and both are wrong.

The pew-rent costs martyrdom, a Christ on the cross, crusades, holy wars, inquisition, trains of missionaries, sacrifices in flame and blood, wearying vigils by the midnight lamp, holy women in the church, the blood of Saints, the Pilgrim Fathers, the treasure of ages.

The newspaper—I will be pardoned for the comparison with the church—cost four hundred years of battle

for human liberty, men imprisoned for the sake of truth, early martyrs in the stocks, the ears of Prynne, the pillory for Defoe, the tail of the cart to Tyburn for Roger L'Estrange, jail and the hangman's bonfire for early American colonial editors, the trials of John Wilkes and Junius, the throes of Milton's "Aeropagitica," the perils of the Massachusetts Spy and the ride of Paul Revere.

The newspaper—a two-cent proposition!

It is one of the largest industries in the United States. The printing business is capitalized at \$720,231,654 in the U. S. It employs over 700,000 people. There are 25,000 newspapers. Their income is over \$810,000,000 a year. They circulate over 31,000,000 copies every day of the daily newspaper. Of all papers and periodicals they circulate a total of 250,594,907 copies per issue. The total number of daily papers issued in a year is more than 9,000,000,000—over nine thousand million. A twelve page paper will take over nine feet of paper a yard wide. The web of paper needed to print all of the daily papers of America for a year would be 81,000 million feet long. The web of paper from the daily press of America will reach from earth to sun in a few years.

One New York newspaper has a yearly expense account of about \$5,000,000. Some manufacturing industry, is it not? It costs one American newspaper close to two millions a year for newsprint paper and ink. Some little two-cent paper, eh! Only it is sold for a cent a copy.

What else—some brains, some responsibility, some risk, some patience, some genius, some courage, some power, some faith, some hope, some foresight, some statesmanship, some philosophy, some study, some work.

A newspaper costs also heart and soul, gray hairs and early graves. It calls on conscience, and demands

the sacrifice of comfort and vacations. It is manufacturing, preachment, prophecy, business risk and many other hazards, combined.

It is eternal watchfulness—blazing competition in the search of news, heroes in every field, all habited places of earth, under the earth, under the sea, in the skies, over battle fields, over the top, in the trenches, in the cabinets, in the courts, in commerce and in finance—all specialists—all for two cents a day.

NOW! Do you think that it costs but two cents. True, that's what it sells for. But it costs! As well ask what freedom costs!

ON "A NIGHT IN THE OPEN"



HE night began to shut down and we were far from camp. We might have made it, but the October sunset enticed us and the swift flying twilight bade us stay. There would be worry in camp, but there would be something new out here, in the open, and Adventure beckoned us with winsome smile.

We built a fire in the open tote-road by the side of a low embankment of tall grasses. The tote-road is a sort of Fifth Avenue in the deep woods. It was built for carrying supplies to logging camps. It had been long since abandoned and its grassy way is now untouched by the slow, grinding runner of the heavy sleds. The trees stand all around it, deep, mysterious. If you will step out into the middle of the road and look upward you may see the stars. But if you look right or left or straight ahead or backward there are the tall trees watching you and swaying to and fro as tho moving to some song of the forests.

We had supper—not much—but a few remnants of a luncheon and a partridge that we plucked and roasted on a spit before the open fire. Then we lit our pipes and lay on the boughs that we had cut and piled up alongside the embankment of the road. And then we were very comfortable, on the soft bed, feet to the fire, Injun fashion. The sparks from the fire rose softly up into the cool, fresh air. It was too pleasant for words. Flames from an open fire in the woods have a curious way with them. They seem to be very friendly and social. They comfort one as never can they do elsewhere—not even in the broad fireplace. There, they are circumscribed. Here, they seem to reach out and, now and then, open up vistas in the woods and then shut them quickly as tho permitting you to peep into woodland arcana. I remember looking out into them as tho into cathedrals—the columnar vastness of St. Peter's at Rome or that wonderful nave at Milan.

You will easily fall asleep with your feet to the open fire of a night, in the open. And then, something will awaken you, and you will declare that it is the stillness. In reality it is the forest calling you to arouse and hear its story. It sighs and sings. It rubs branches together as the man plays the bull-fiddle. It has high trebles in the upper levels. The brooks play like harps, away off. There is a low rustling of indefinable things. It might be tiny life, surging to and fro, underfoot. It might be some vast spirit of the forest, moving among the trees. Often you are not sure that it is a sound. It may be only the throbbing of your life-blood in the intense stillness.

I remember that along about two o'clock in the morning when it was very dark, I arose and put more wood on the fire. Then I stepped out into the road and looked up into the sky. Far up, and up, swung the spruce tops. All around hummed the wind in the surface of the forest-deeps, as the winds swing over the

ocean tops to them on the floor of the sea. Everything was full of immensity, primordial. And yet, in that hour, I had an actual experience. Instead of feeling myself but an atom, but a tiny thing amid all this, I suddenly and forever came to feel myself one with pine and spruce, with the leaf and branch, with the listening things in the woods, with the spirits and fays, that might be all about me,—one, even, with Arcturus and Orion and all the gleaming suns that shone on high. I never had a greater accession of Faith.

If you are inclined to doubt God, go into the woods; camp of a night by the open camp-fire and observe His ways. For the camp-fire's gleam reaches to the stars and often brings their shining down into the human heart. God may lay his hands on you some night when you are out in the open. He has, on a great many people, by sea and by land.

The next day we went rather sheepishly to camp. "Why didn't you come home?" asked they.

"Well, you see," said my companion, and then paused.

"How in the name of the Lord could we?" said I. And they never knew what I meant.

ON "TOM AND HIS HATCHET"



DID YOU ever read Rabelais' story of Tom Well-hung, the honest country fellow of Gravoie, who lost his hatchet and set up such a bellowing to Jupiter that he disturbed the gods at their council until Jupiter sent Mercury down to find out what was the trouble?

When the light-heeled deity came back and reported to the Gods, Jupiter said to Mercury, "Run down and give the poor fellow three hatchets—one his own, one

of gold and one of silver. If he take his own, give him the other two; if he take the silver or the gold, chop off his head with his own and henceforth serve me all losers of hatchets the same."

So Mercury does as bid and in a trice he alights nimbly on earth and throwing down the three hatchets, says: "Thou has bawled long enough to be a' dry; thy prayers are granted by Jupiter; see which of these is thy hatchet and take it away with thee."

Tom lifts up the golden hatchet; peeps on it and finds it heavy; then staring at Mercury, says, "Cods-zouks, this is none o' mine; I won't ha' 't." The same he does with the silver. At last he takes up his own hatchet, examines it at the end of the helve and finds his own mark there and ravished with joy, he cries, "By the mass, this is my hatchet."

"Honest fellow," says Mercury, "I leave it with thee; take it; and because thou hast wished moderately and chosen justly, Jupiter gives you these two others. Thou hast now the means to be rich. Be also honest."

Tom started off and went his way. Finally he came to the city of Chinon where he sold his silver and gold hatchets and bought lands and barns and a great many other things that Master Francois gives in detail as is his wont. And he was very rich.

His brother bumpkins became amazed at Tom's fortune and made it their business to find out how he got it, and learning that it was by losing a hatchet, they sold everything and bought hatchets and lost them and their laments stirred again the councils of heaven and brought Jupiter to account. The bumpkins brayed and bellowed and prayed. "Ho, ho Jupiter, my hatchet, my hatchet!" The air rang with the cries of these rascally losers of hatchets.

Mercury was nimble in bringing them hatchets. To each the offering was the same—a silver, a gold, and the hatchet that he had lost. Each loser was for

the gold, giving thanks in abundance to Jupiter, but in the nick of time as he bowed and stooped to take it from the ground! Whip! in a trice, Mercury cut off his head as commanded. And of heads there was just the same number as there was of lost hatchets.

You see how it was with these rascals. You see how it is now with most of those who wish something easy. They never wish in moderation—never satisfied with what good fortune brings them, let it be much or little.

Will you be like him of whom Rabelais tells—who wished that Our Lady's church were brim full of steel needles to the spire and that he could have as many ducats as might be crammed into as many bags as might be sewed with these needles, until they wore out both at point and eye.

Wish, therefore, for mediocrity and it shall be given to you and over and above yet; that is to say, provided you bestir yourselves manfully and do your very best in the meantime.

ON "TREES AND FORESTS"



THIS USUALLY the case that we do not prize what we have, as fully as we should. In the days of the pioneers there was an inborn hatred of the forests. They were dark, dreadful and inhabited by wild beasts. They say that, at Andover Seminary seventy-five years ago, if a young student wanted to ingratiate himself with the faculty he went out before breakfast and cut down one or two of the beautiful trees in their great avenue before anyone was awake. The government took a certain care of the forests for ship-build-

ing and after that, dropped the subject for years. Maine got rid of her forests largely because people hated them. They wanted farms, fields, settlers, railroads.

Like many other good things, regard for the tree has come into its own again. It is time for the government of states again to take the tree in charge. It is high time that trees were a public ward and no man could cut them even on his own land, without public consent. Without trees we should have barrenness all over the land. Why let the portable saw mill starve a state?

So it is that in every civilized community, the ownership of forests eventually comes to the government. It is estimated that even the most acute business man does not look forward over six years. The state ought to do better than this. The state ought to bet on the forest and appropriate its money to buying them for the people. The state of Maine ought to spend a million dollars every two years on buying up its own domain for the people. If I were Governor, or a candidate for Governor, this would be my platform. I would buy land for the Folks. Frederick the Great did it and Prussia is somewhat pummeling us because her taxes have been so light these hundreds of years because of the income from the forests.

I was reading the other day a little story in one of Edward Everett Hale's books about Bishop Watson—he wrote the "Apology, you know—!" How very angry he was with Charles James Fox because he gave him what Watson called the poorest see in England! But Watson had a stubborn streak in him and when he found himself in the north of Wales, where the savagery of generations had destroyed all of the wood, he put in his time and his sixpences planting firs on ground that seemed worthless. He outlived the six-year period and kept on raising seedling firs and plant-

ing them and when he died his people found themselves, to their surprise, among the richest men in England because the trees had grown, while their father was both asleep and awake.

In 1900, Prussia received over ten million dollars revenue from her forests after they had paid all expenses of care and development. There is one institution in Maine that is almost as worthy to own the forests as is the state—because it is wise under a great man—and that is the Great Northern Paper Co. Its President, Garret Schenck, is a man who sees over six years forward. He cuts only the “crop” of trees—never devastates. He is a “builder.” Would that there were more like Garret Schenck—a man whom Maine ought to decorate with the Legion of Honor.

There is no more an inborn hatred of the tree. We have begun to revere it. We consider as wanton and ruthless, the man who fells a beautiful elm for commerce. He has cut down and killed a living thing, something beautiful as a cathedral—in its way. We look to forests as to sanctuaries—taverns of rest for our very souls; nearer to God than the town; carpeted with finer tapestries than the looms can make; aisled with silver pathways for the living streams; studded overhead with gold and jade and chrysoprased; all the while beating and throbbing with the free music of the winds in the trees—an organ whose melodies are supreme and sempiternal.

Can't we—a free people—do something to save for our children and their children, every year a little more and more of the domain of this sort—next to the church, in devotional impulse, better than some hospitals in its healing? I vote for it! Do you? If you do—say so!

ON "THE GOLDEN RULE IN DAILY LIFE"



ABOUT thirty-two years ago, a calendar came to my desk that served a good purpose.

It bore on the top of it, a good-sized picture of a carpenter's square printed in bright gold and, under it, these words, "The Golden Rule: As ye would that others should do unto you, do ye even so unto them."

It occurred to me that this was a very good rule in newspaper reporting and that if followed, it would save many a heart-burning; soothe many a pillow; ease over many a difficulty. I am taking no credit and am willing to let things go so far as I am concerned, as I stand conscious of many shortcomings and many failures, but none the less sure, this rule has saved many a person in these cities in these thirty years or more from much distress.

"Put yourself in the other fellow's place." A small indiscretion; a lapse from the straight way; a chance for the newspaper to make public the ignominy—all of these are to be counted as tho you, yourself, sad and repentant, faced the ignominy of the big-type and the headliners on the front page. There is no power so blighting as printer's ink. It is often placed in the hands of immaturity. A mere boy may hold in his hand the very dynamite of publicity that may blast homes, break hearts, ruin lives and weaken hope. Not that crime, wickedness and deceit do not need to be scourged. They must be. Scorpion's whips are not too much for wilful men and women who debase public life and morals.

But the golden things of life are those that, after all, have not been printed. I recall one Christmas eve when a father, whose wayward son had been apprehended in wrong-doing, came to me and asked for con-

sideration on this day when of all days it was peace on earth, good-will to men. It was a serious matter, but repentance was on its way. Yet it was "news." Yes, it was news. But it was something else than news also. It was condemnation. The story never happened. The young man is now a fine and capable business man. We have never spoken of it since, but I doubt not that every Christmas day he says something to himself about it.

It is safe to say that there is no better rule of conduct in life than this one: No man who has power of any kind can afford to slight it. It applies with just as much force and effect to other business than the newspaper-business. But in a thousand ways it has operated in the life of this business to far greater good than can be measured.

Try it out! Look at everything from the viewpoint of the other man or woman. Say to yourself, "Would I like to have this thing done to me, that I am proposing to do to my fellow-man?" If you are going to attack a man personally, even if you have the goods, think it over: "Is this in the interest of public good, or is it merely to satisfy a personal spite or a feeling of revenge?" And then ask, "How would I like it, under the circumstances, if the situation were reversed?"

This is very old stuff. It was said a very great while ago. But it has stood the test of time and a billion or more instances. It is good religion, good morals, good business. It is the white way. It is the helpful way. Society never suffered from it.

If the Huns had only thought of it, there would have been no war—no superman philosophy, no reign of frightfulness, no rapings in Belgium, no bayoneting of helpless non-combatants, no hereafter, in the day when the grim reckoning will be made—here, or before the Master. Nearly all religion is comprised in it; for it suggests the adoption of the first commandment, which

is the greatest: "Thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

ON "THE QUIETER ROAD"



FTER you have driven for many miles on a level, man-made road, it is pleasant to turn aside on one of those old-fashioned country roads that seem just to have happened.

They meander aimlessly under arching trees, the wheel-ruts soft to the tires and making no sound. You can see no distance ahead and are therefore content to drive slowly and get acquainted with a friendly road.

There is spur and opportunity for thinking in the lazy country road. In the first place you have been going too fast, anyway, on the boulevard. You have been burning up things—gasoline, tires, money, nerves, time, human-companionship, home-ties. You have been just speeding thru the air, seeing nothing, eyes fixed on the road, straight-ahead monotony hour by hour, day by day, mind attuned to nothing but getting there and then getting elsewhere, speed-mad.

So—when you do turn aside into the quiet country road for a time and lean back, perhaps you have time to notice who is at your side. She's your wife—I hope. You can possibly find time to take her hand as you did in the long ago, and say a sweet word to her. Perhaps you may be able to forget business long enough to get sentimental. It will do no harm—on a country road—when the trees arch low and the birds chatter love-lyrics. You can perhaps draw a long breath and light a cigar and go so slowly that the smoke will rise in incense around your head and filter thru the trees. You

can stretch your legs and unbutton your vest and be a man. You can inhale long, long breaths of this kind of air and never get a sniff of engine-exhaust. This sort of a road leads you away from towns and temptation, where you may forget in what country you are traveling. You notice how the sunshine checkers the brown earth of the old meandering road and lies also lovingly on your garments. To be decent you should ride not over six miles an hour—or two—in this sanctuary. Otherwise you will disturb the chipmunks and disconcert Madame Partridge and send her scurrying away with her brood. If it is the right kind of a road—and this one is of the right kind—you will meet no one. If it is the right kind of a road even the guide-board is down and points to heaven significantly and very truthfully—some Harrison or Bethel in the skies. You may even stop in the road and hear no horn of displeasure behind you, tooting you “off the earth.” You may hear a stake-driver or a whip-poor-will or see a deer, in any midsummer day.

It is the road on which, as Thoreau says of his road “to the Corner,” one “can walk and recover the lost child that I am, without ringing any bell; where nothing ever was discovered to detain a traveler; where I never passed the time of day with anyone—being indifferent to arbitrary divisions of time; where Tullius Hostilius might have disappeared, at any rate has never been seen.” The pale lobelia and the Canada snapdragon, a little hardhack and meadow-sweet peep over the fence, nothing more serious to obstruct the view. A road that passes over the height of land between earth and Heaven separating those streams that flow earthward from those that flow heavenward.

About six miles an hour—I have suggested. It may bring you into strange clearings, dooryards that run down to the old road. These casual glimpses of life strengthen the pleasure of the solitude, as you run on,

up hill and down, around sly corners where the trees bend to the road. Just a bit like life itself, isn't it! Off the boulevard—when the nerves give out! Out of the sight and sound of traffic when the tired body refuses longer to function. Back to nature when the old "doc" takes his finger off your pulse and says "rest-cure for you."

Why not quit the boulevard, occasionally now and then before the "old doc" warns you? Why not slow up and turn into some old-fashioned meandering country road, where it makes no odds which way you fare whether you are coming or going; where the spirit is free and the soul is at peace. You will do it eventually—why not now?

ON "THE TRUTH WITHOUT A TEXT"



WE ARE ALL under sentence of death, said Walter Pater in a famous paragraph. Hence we should not spend our time here in listlessness but should give ourselves up to art and song.

That was written some years ago. Of course one must not say such things now. Art and song are out-of-date. All emotions but hate and desire to kill are tabooed. One feels himself a slacker to be talking about art and song—much less give himself up to them. Such things as made Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Goethe, Michelangelo, Tennyson, Shelley—these are no longer to be compared with the Kaiser and his sons. It used to be a common philosophy that art and song and literature counted. Now it is the machine-gun and the poison-shell. But after all—we have hopes. We believe that Truth is mighty.

These days of anxiety are long. Days of despair are longer. The plain fact is that we must not let go of art and song. We must not let go of Truth and Beauty and Goodness. Whatever happens, we must not lose faith in the Providence of God. We must go to some place to find it when the things around us seem very dark. If it is in your Bible, seek it. If it is at your confessor's knees, seek it. Art and song were about all of Pater's religion. He was a semi-pagan of epicureanism. Perhaps YOU have something else. Go to it. But whatever you do, don't give up even if the Germans hammer at the gates of America.

One of the best remedies in this troubled age, is to do your bit every day and then take a walk into the fields and woods. They are tuneful of the thrush, which is not yet aware of being a slacker, and all blossoming with the posies, unaware that this is the era of frightfulness. Out there a man has a right to lift his head and smile into the face of God. He is no slacker, walking in a field. He is no shirker, seeking the solution of the mystery of the sentence of death, out where the blossoms scent the air. If it be wrong to give thought to art and song, why thus do trail and bloom all the flowers of Milton's "Lycidas," Arnold's "Thyrsis" and Shelley's "Question?"

Hills erode; oak-trees fall; but they outlast dynasties. As I have said, poppies spring from crater-pits. Nature cannot be beaten or gassed; or driven beyond the Marne. If you go into the June woods and lie on your back at noon, you may see the eagle nesting her young—a liberty that symbolizes our national hopes. The trees stand very erect and independent. If they fall, they fertilize. If they pass the season and become dead in foliage, they have seeded new patches on which the sunlight falls. Here is life-eternal, unending, resurrectionary. If this were undisturbed a billion years, still would Nature keep on reproducing its ener-

gies. It is the work of God alone. Man never had a hand in it. It is the Creator's own garden-spot. Here He shows you what is what. Who's who does not count. Here are color, art, song, religion, purpose, divinity. Go out and find them.

And if you stay until evening and the slant rays of the sun linger among the tree-trunks as thru stained glass windows in the cathedral of pillars, and the day grows grave and reverend, you may look up thru the branches and see the evening stars.

Perhaps there is one for you.

If so, it will surely comfort and uplift you. And this is no sermon. It is the cold truth, without a text.

ON THE "LADIES"



THE "ladie" (or rather "woman," which is the preferable term because it is older) is essential. There were no "ladies" in the Bible but there were a number of women. If they had not been essential, it is very likely that man would have tried to get along without them and save expenses. Adam tried it a couple of days and caved in. They have since been taken on as a regular thing and are now saving the world for democracy with war-bread.

Inasmuch as they have been in the world quite a while, it is customary to say that the ladies have advanced in power and in liberty. And this is probably true. Take some of the notable women and think how they were held back in the old days. There was Joan of Arc! Kept under an apple tree until she was sixteen years old, or thereabout, she was let loose in armor and so repressed by the conservative spirit of the times that all she was permitted to do was to storm a few

cities, capture a few princes, crown a king or two, confute the learned judges at her trial, save a nation and die in the flames of martyrdom to rise from her ashes to be the Voice, the appeal, the spiritual salvation of a nation. Consider the idle and repressed existence of Cleopatra! There was a woman who might have made something of herself if she had been given half a chance. She was only a Queen of Egypt and a few other communities, roaming around in barges, dressed in nothing but a camisole; setting modern fashions and working out the fate of a few Roman potentates. Nothing but serfdom, that's what! Then there was Lucretia Borgia! A timid, shrinking thing! Think what a bully good Red Cross she would be today in Kaiser Bill's immediate family. What a boon she would be to society if she could only be over there mixing cooling drinks for the Hohenzollern family. Then there was that blushing violet of a woman, Queen Elizabeth. What a place would she take today in society. I can see her now, taking her place as a "lady" among women, dancing the fox-trot in perfect freedom and perspiring freely in a peekaboo waist with pink ribbons showing daintily thru. Poor Queen Elizabeth! She never really had a chance. No more did Boadicea or Sappho or Molly Pitcher or a number of other women.

Of course we hear a good deal more about the ladies now than we used to and we see a good deal more of them. That is, so to speak, if one's eyesight is good. It appears from what one may hear and see, even if he does wear bi-focal spectacles—that woman is emerging from her hitherto environment. But I don't know about that. Eve had some environment. Of course she really made the fashions and had no rivals. The Vogue was simple in her day, but she did her best. And in some sense she was ahead of her time. And she was not extravagant. Nobody can say that of Eve,

when he looks back, and, as Mark Twain says, sees our simple and lowly first of women garbed in her modification of Harry Lauder's Highland costume.

So, in my humble opinion, woman has not changed so much. Some men have tried to keep her back, but they have not succeeded. They have tried to keep her brains in chains; but you will notice that it has been a hard job. It is no longer possible to deny her the possession of a soul, an entity whose future is hers to determine, in all freedom under the law. She has the same right that man has to the establishment of her service to the world, by work, by voice, by vote.

And spiritually, in the sympathy of her service, she far transcends man. The world is full of Florence Nightingales, today. They are all over the death-strewn fields of Flanders and Verdun. They are hourly playing the part of hero with stout hearts and unthinking altruism. And they are suffering losses—deep wounds in the heart of hearts, where the first-born cuddled and crooned. We talk a lot about emancipation of woman. But bear this in mind—whenever she had a chance—as queen or warrior, or poet, or preacher, or physician, or nurse, or scientist or cab-driver, she has made good. The only agency from which she needs to be emancipated is the narrow, two-bit-wide opinion of the so-called man, who calls her a lower order of creation, and who does not know what creation means, as addressed to the human soul.

ON "THE PRICE OF A GOOD TIME"



SAW a moving-picture the other day entitled "The Price of a Good Time." It was intended to show that girls cannot monkey with conventions, unless tragedy may follow.

So far, it was a fine picture. The poor girl was led to suicide and the man went scot free. And the other woman in the picture was softened and induced to put off the garb of snobbishness. This seemed tough. The girl was the least guilty in the whole crowd. But she had to pay. And that is the rule.

So girls better look out! They have to pay for good times with usury. Others pay for them frequently at going prices. The man who eats hot-suppers to excess, pays for the good time with a warty liver and "Bright's." The wine-bibber pays for his time with a headache. The money-grubber and miser pays for his "Good Time" by having his heirs fight over his will. The Speed-demon pays for his good time in a smash-up. The man who takes revenge into his own hand and whose idea of a "Good Time" is carried into effect, dies in the Chair or passes his days in a prison. But the girl pays the highest price of all. There was an indelible mark on the Magdalene.

But in this picture, the stress was laid on the home, from which this particular girl went to her "Good Time." It was a tough-looking home. Colors are laid on moving pictures with a broad brush. Here was a brother, preaching anarchism; a disagreeable mother; a paralytic father, who had to be fed with a spoon and who dribbled his bread and milk over his chin. This was shown as a foil to a happy home in which the girl had no need to go elsewhere for her fun. This was, of course, the home of one of those care-free and portly persons, known as the traffic-cop. His home was

sweet. His girl could have her "steady" come every evening and sit on the door-steps. Not so the other girl. Her home-life was cold, hard, full of nagging, sordid, depressing. She went, therefore, where she could have her "Good Time." And she settled.

This is a very old story and very crudely told; but there is truth in it and the kind of truth that has to be enforced frequently, lest we forget. Girls who have good homes, sometimes seem to lack appreciation, but as a rule they are not so apt to be driven to the streets by this modern lust for a "Good Time." At any rate, the household where there is fun and laughter and friendship and sweet forbearance, is not so apt to have its tragedies. And if it does have them, there is no recrimination. Those who have made it a "home," have at least done their best. The filial love—a sweeter thing does not exist—could not have been extinguished there! It must have been trampled on, outside the premises, by some Hun.

So, most people who saw the picture, found a fairly good lesson in it. And there are a lot of good lessons in the movies. They are often enforced with a bludgeon, so to speak, but they get there mostly. If any girl in the audience was touched by this picture to the degree of pledging herself to count the cost of "good times" before breaking the rule of "Safety First" for her name, her good repute, her mother's heart, her father's faith—it has done a work that the church may emulate.

The "Good Time" is quickly over. The long, long life stretches before you. You don't want to walk its pathway as a social, a moral cripple, but upright, with the crown of womanhood like a halo and the sense of devotion and righteousness as supporting arms.

ON "THE WIND AND THE SOUL"



ONE day last fall I went into the woods, under the shadow of Little Spencer mountain, not so very far from the Canadian border. It was a Sunday and the winds were blowing an October gale until the ponds were full of racing white-caps and the beaches lashed themselves white with foam and the torn roots of the lily pads tossed high into the shore grasses, dripping with the water.

The path was along "the blazed trail" to the old lumber-camps—a peaceful path, among very large first-growth spruce, over a running brook and, all of the while, in a dense solitude that had no roads or paths save the blazed trail. It was after two o'clock in the afternoon and the sun was westering thru the tops of the trees, but below all was faintly lighted as are the deep woods.

It was the gale in the tree-tops that got me. It sounded with the swaying and groaning and the sweeping on, wave after wave, most like the riding of Huns on the "coursers of the air." I sat on a huge tree whose trunk, broken in some gale, had fallen over the trail. Say! Everyone ought to go out alone and get acquainted with himself some day like this when the wind blows and Nature is rioting.

All of the elves of the upper world seemed to be playing up there. No one knows what strange fancies may come and what poem may come from it.

I wrote something and left it where I wrote it on the clean scarf of the prostrate spruce, which I made with my hunting knife. I expect it was a poor verse. But I remember that then I thought it fine because I was deeply moved by the music—the "immense" music that played in a great symphony overhead. And the other day—what do you suppose happened! A man

came into the office and asked for me. His name was Ralph Cuddy. Said he, "I saw, last winter, on a tree in the woods near Moosehead, way in by a brook that lies next to a swamp, some verses you wrote and signed about the wind in the tree-tops. I was thinking about them today. I live in Portland. I had to come to Lewiston. I decided to come in and see you. I am going right back into the woods. I want to hear the waves on the beaches. I want to hear the wind in the trees."

Now the wind is a mystery and a friend and a foe and a spur to wicked consciences and a balm to the sick and a strange babbler. It is a night friend crooning in the chimney. It is a wild and dissipated roisterer howling around corners of dark nights like drunken men in orgies. It is a banshee picking at the shutters and rattling windows. It is a horde of furies in storms as I have heard them in the Gulf Stream when ships were going down to sea. It is a fine companion for the striding heart of him who goes afield just to see the clouds a-dancing. It is the piping of Peter Pan, if you like. It is the music of a summer night. It is the kiss of angels, on weary foreheads. It is the long, deep, in-drawn breath of the planet and its exhalation. Oh, man! There are as many winds as you and all you love may have of moods. It is a sigh, a song, a discord, a dithyramb. The wind soft-foots around sometimes in the woods like some animate thing. You can seem to see it watching you from behind a bush. It draws near, as Browning says, "with a running hush." It is the voice of just one thing—life! for without it the world would be dead. It is the breath of Nature thru all its innumerable throats waking the world to a great choral chant, for the glory of God!

Now that is not at all what I wrote on the clean, white wood of the scarfed spruce last fall up there in the woods. A chap has a right to be sentimental in the

woods, provided he does not impose it on any one. But just the same, I would not give up the friendship that I have for the wind, in all of its phases, for any other thing in nature. The beating rains, the wild gales! They soothe and refresh. They seem brotherly. And often I have had the notion, that in the last hour—the last heart-beat, the wind, that loves us best, comes along from its waiting thru all the ages and takes care of the little new soul of us, just unfurling its wings for “the new adventure” and upbears it and leads it safely on, to the place appointed for it from the beginning and so on world without end, forever and forever.

ON “THE APPEAL OF MYSTERY”



HERE is a memory of old times that most of us have now, undiminished by the years that have passed. And that is the early morning arrival of the circus. How we did love to get up and see the circus come in.

I don't mean the modern circus that came by railroad train, last year, but the circus that came in over the road, fifty years ago—Stone and Murray's, for instance, with its band wagon drawn by forty white horses. Count them! For-r-r-ty Hors-s-s-es!

“Here they come!” Dim thru the morning mist a cloud of dust; the creaking of wagons; indistinct sounds that we conjured into roaring of wild hyenas and ravening of tigers and the bleeding of behemoths. Every marvel that had adorned the sides of barns for weeks—we anticipated and we expected to see; and every glimpse out there on the roadside (barefooted boys with more wonders before them than any circus

could ever give) was just so much, pilfered from the show, whose admission was the untold sum of a quarter of a dollar.

Then the dusty trail behind the show to town; the stay at the circus ground lugging water to assuage the thirst of the elephant; the forgotten breakfast; the tired lad trudging home about eleven o'clock to get mother's tender comfort on his absence; the nap before dinner; the return to the circus-ground; the afternoon show; the evening regrets not to be able to see it again; the side-shows and ballyhoos; the visions of actors in tights thru the open fly of the dressing tent; the sight of the circus-people eating supper; the smells of the sawdust and the animals—it is a composite picture of the boyhood experiences of every man.

What was the lure of the circus? It was the lure of the greatest joy of life—mystery. The mystery of people is their greatest charm. Those people who are commonplace, who never do the unexpected, have no charm in the common use of the word. The lure of books that endure is—mystery. A man writes a learned book telling you all about life. Poor man! With maybe fifty years of experience, telling you the secret of life. Better read the Adventure of the Valorous Knight Quixote de la Mancha. We link arms in companionship with the man who has charm even if he is short on facts; for, after all, we use learning given us much as we use money and spread it around and have small regard for the person who gives it to us. It is current coin hard to get and not so interesting except for its uses. But the mystery-man—him we love and follow.

To boyhood eyes the circus opened new worlds. So, too, ever since in life we have been hunting for new worlds. Some go to strange lands and over seas and into the desert and over the mountain tops to find answer to the desire.

This instinctive craving was planted for some purpose—thus to be a ruling passion of man. The appeal to crawl under the tent to see the glories on the other side! The glimpses of strange creatures in gold and tinsel! The desire not for facts alone but for things never seen on sea or land! The eager yearning for visions of some new apocalypse not in our native village! All these are implanted in every man in some degree—in some more than in others.

What is it all but a part of the elemental dower of humankind that reaches out in the finite for what is to be found only in the infinite.

So when we small boys in the dry and dusty dawn a half a century ago, and when you boys of this later age get up to see the circus—you are simply responding to the call of Adam and Eve—to know mystery!

ON "THEM PANTS"



WOODROW WILSON'S advent into high society in London reminds me of my own—it is so different. And as one must occasionally lapse into the autobiographical, my readers will forgive me if I digress a bit and call their attention to a down-easter in London one October evening in 1900.

It was the close of the first day and as in duty bound it was my desire to make a stir in London, like any true American—Mr. Wilson included. So before leaving Maine, I bought a pair of trousers, designed by a Lewiston tailor and warranted to be made on the architecture of the latest word in London as seen on a red and blue plate in the tailor-shop. As I recall it the pants were red, in the picture, but I chose a more mod-

est color. As we came into Paddington, the city was packed with returning Boer war veterans, the City Imperial Volunteers, and it was impossible to get a hotel nearer in the city, so we stopped at this beautiful terminal tavern. I did my duty to London by buying a high hat. Nobody really was anybody, in London, in those days, without a high hat. And that night a very clever and stylish looking New York gentleman who had been living in London, came over to the hotel to take our party out for an evening in select society. We had a fine little company of fellow-travelers, ladies and gentlemen with us, and I decided to make London sit up and take notice with my new trousers—otherwise, "them pants."

I went up to my room to dress. The pants had never been taken from the original package, but hung in all their flowing beauty in the wardrobe in the fine old mahogany room that we occupied. As I took them down, they seemed to be indescribably long and flowing. They seemed to be ells and ells longer than any pants I had ever owned before; but there they were, just as I had picked them; just as I had plucked them. I stood them up straight on the carpet and the button of the top looked me square in the eye. They had rotundity. They had slack behind; they had breadth across the crupper, that I never thought measured my girth. A sinking of the heart befell me. With feverish haste I stepped into those pants, aware that the eyes of royalty and the ladies might rest upon them. I reached for the seat of those pants and lo! I was lost.

Dear friends! Picture me—a hurried departure from Lewiston; a pair of pants built on impulse; the only pair I had for the tout ensemble that went with my new tall-hat; the only pair that went with a frock coat of the vintage of 1899; the only pair of pants in London, and the guests hammering on the door with theater tickets in their hands. What did I do? Neces-

sity is the mother of safety-pins. I pulled the pants up and took four cleats across the western front. I looped up eleven yards across the Rhine; I turned them up around the bottoms; I drew in the jibsheet and furled the mizzen-mast of "them pants." I laid away yards and yards of slack in the dome of "them pants." I pulled them flat over the abdomen but the concealment in the rear beat the rubbish in a back-alley. I held the waistband of "them pants" in my teeth while I took up plaits in the region of the pocket. I had to stand on a chair to get into the watch-pocket of "them pants." I could have rented the ell and a couple of furnished flats in "them pants" and then had enough of "them pants" left to build a Y. M. C. A. block. Once I fell into them and almost smothered to death. If I put both hands into the pants pocket at the same time, I caught myself stealing money. I could have put all my baggage and a hair mattress in the seat of "them pants" and then had more room than there is in a union station. If I had happened to have fallen down in them, I would have crawled out of the leg.

But I wore 'em. I had to, and as I buttoned my vest over the top of the pants and stepped jauntily into the midst of the waiting throng of friends, I felt like William H. Taft. We passed thru many adventures that evening. I sat on safety pins; I looked down into the bosom of my vest and saw the hem of "them pants" slowly rising to engulf me, and then I took a walk. Three times I narrowly escaped having my tall hat pushed off by rising of the pants. Once the hem got into a cup of tea that we were taking with the ladies—sort of dropped over into the nectar. Once I looked behind me on Piccadilly and the pants were chasing me like a trail of crime. Once in a London club, they picked up several safety pins where I arose.

All things end. I came home to my room at two a.m. My room-mate, who had been elsewhere, sat

there. He weighed three hundred and four. He had one leg in the seat of a pair of pants. Said he: "Who in hell packed a little boy's pants in my bag? Who in the name of Tophet has built me a pair of trousers, age seven years? I got into these about an hour ago, to try them on, and say! They aren't fit for publication. If I had that dam tailor—"

But why pursue the subject. I had been dragging the seat of his new trousers all over London and he had been trying to strangle himself in mine. London never knew the secret; but they date certain things in London from the advent of "them pants," just the same.

ON "THE CLOCK OF THE CENTURIES"



ONE THOUGHT persists with me that I have never been able to express effectively, and probably I cannot now. It is this: Every day that ever passed on earth was the latest, the up-to-date day.

When Noah built the Ark, he undoubtedly felt himself a modern. He looked back on Adam as ancient history. When Sodom and Gomorrah fell it was the greatest calamity that had ever happened. The Greeks thought that they had arrived. They believed that they had reached the pinnacle and that further progress was impossible. They prided themselves on their culture, their religion, their society, their art, their learning. They were *fin-de-siecle*. Their dandies were the last word and their theaters and their games the triumph of artistic expression.

Some day, a thousand years hence—what will be said of this age? We have the printing-press, we have

many electrical discoveries. The air, the seas, under the seas, the earth at our control, so far as transportation is concerned. How will we stand? Are we already old-fashioned with our wars and our brutalities?

An eminent professor of history and mathematics has enforced the thought by an effort of the imagination. He has fancied a gigantic clock that records not days, hours, minutes. These are all too small. His clock records no space of time smaller than a century. Prof. James Henry Robinson of Columbia University reckons that man has been on earth about 240,000 years. There are many different opinions on this subject, but Prof. Robinson's is as good as any. If it be true that man has stood erect, tail-less and thinking for himself for 240,000 years, each hour on the clock represents 20,000 years, for we call ourselves now at noon—just for the fun of it. Each minute is 300 years. Each second is five years. Think of that—a clock which ticks a second only once in five years. A clock that ticks off a minute only in three centuries!

Now how does that clock look? What think you happened in the dawn and in the morning hours of the slow-moving clock? Absolutely nothing happened up to half-past eleven o'clock! It was actually 11.40 a.m. before the first record of Babylonian and Greek culture appears. Greek Philosophy was born at 11.50. And that leaves us only ten minutes for all of recorded history. Think of it—only 3,000 years out of the 240,000 of which we know the remotest thing! It was only a little more than 11.56 that the English nation became dominated by William The Conqueror. It was only two minutes ago that America was discovered. It was only two minutes ago that printing from movable type was discovered as an art. The United States has been a nation less than a minute.

In short it has been only a minute or so that we

have actually been awake—as we see it. But the noon will move on and on. And each hour will be the latest syllable of recorded time and each day will be the last word. And each yesterday will rise above our lowly graves as old, old, old. When this clock ticks out another minute and three more centuries have elapsed, what will be our place in the world? Will it stand for rehabilitation and progress, or retrogression and despair? The brave men living and dead on the fields of Europe must make answer. They and we, who are with them or against them here at home, and the spirit of justice, dormant in lands now oppressed by militarism, must settle the question.

ON "THE INTOLERABLE"



N OLD Roman philosopher says, "Don't take upon yourself the burden of your whole life at any one time, nor form an image of all probable misfortunes. In any emergency, ask yourself, "What is there intolerable in this?"

In other words, it will be better not to borrow trouble and not to look too far ahead into the darkness. Better make the best of present conditions and confront the beast in the woods when you meet him. He may not be there!

Thus, many people are continually settling questions that never come up. Conditions change and the issue you feared never materializes. It is well to do the best you can for today and so order your life that you will be in good shape to meet all emergencies, but as for conjuring up bogies and fussing over things that you are not sure will happen—it is a waste of time.

For instance, I know a young person who upset two

households over settling the question whether or not the two young people of those households should room together in college, a year or so hence. It made a tremendous fuss. One of them failed to get into college. Exit—problem!

There is a whole lot of value in a certain form of procrastination. I don't mean procrastination of immediate duty. I urge rather the putting off of the absolute settlement of many things until they have to be settled. I urge this, for in reality, prompt and sensible judgment is to be made only on the basis of existing circumstances, not on the basis of circumstances as you fancy they may be at some future time. Prompt judgment, wise dealing are best made in the conditions of the moment, but it is not possible to settle today a state of affairs that may exist next September. Nevertheless, many people seem to think they are obliged to attempt it. A good many times you never have to settle it at all. It settles itself. It is like the tariff. We have been trying to settle it for a hundred years. Now it is settling itself on the fields of Flanders. But don't cross bridges until you come to them.

And, too, when things are bad you ask yourself, "What is there intolerable about this?" Is not that a fine line of advice for us today, considering that it comes out of the ages. Suppose that someone had told you five years ago that your little high school boy would be over in France, in a mud-hole, covered with vermin, rats running after him, knee deep in water and shot at with poison gases and shrapnel. You simply could not have stood the thought. Now, it is not intolerable, is it?

There once was a man whose motto was "It might have been worse." Once a friend thought he would put this chap out of countenance. He could not do it easily, so he went to his fancy for material. He accordingly pictured to this friend a terrible situation in

which he had found him in a dream. He had seen this hopeful friend in hell. He was suffering every possible torture. There was not a single loophole left for the poor fellow. It was simply frightful. It was a dream of terror. "Now, sir, what do you say to that?" asked the man triumphantly. "O, it might have been worse," was the reply. "Worse!" echoed the man. "Worse! how could it have been worse?" "Easily," replied the cheerful one. "It might have been true."

That's the way with most of our troubles. They might have been true and that would have been a lot worse than it now is. In suffering and in sorrow it is well to remember that we are living in the present moment and that each moment that we pass brings us so much the nearer to the breaking of the day when the suffering shall have been assuaged and the sorrow have passed away.

Again, "Don't take on the burden of your whole life at any one time." Under any conditions ask yourself, "Is this absolutely intolerable?" The answer is always "No."

ON "CULTIVATE THE BIRDS"



T WILL add to your pleasure in life if you learn a few specialties of the out-doors. For instance, suppose you study botany, or birds, or trees!

There is a woman in a responsible position in a Lewiston Savings Bank of whom I am thinking as an example. You would not know from her casual conversation that she had recently issued a book on the birds of Lewiston-Auburn. Her life is broadened and made happier by her love of birds, fields

and woods. She says: "My first step in ornithology was taken while studying botany when I heard the hermit thrush." She will tell you that it has made her life quite all over; given her abiding interest in the outdoors; there is a fascination about it, quite overpowering. She quotes Dr. Van Dyke: "I put my heart to school, in the woods where veeries sing and brooks run clear and cold, in the fields where the wild flowers spring." I wish I were young again. I would learn as much as I possibly could about the birds, the wild flowers and the trees. Then I could have a share in what John Burroughs, Henry Van Dyke, Henry D. Thoreau and Chapman and many others have enjoyed—all hid from me, except in a general way.

And so I envy the quiet little woman who can go out of a summer dawn into the fields and woods just to hear the bird-song. Every liquid note, that falls on her ear, tells a story to her. To me they are nothing but the sweet chorus of a dawn. To her each note tells the story of the little singer. She sees the bird, in her mind's eye. It is one of God's creatures singing to Him as sings the white-throated sparrow. "O! happiness, happiness, happiness." If I could name the wayside flowers and tell the birds by their songs, I should feel better about it. And if I were a youth, I would not let the opportunity pass. "I go out in the fields," writes Thoreau, "to see what I have caught in the traps which I set for facts." He looked to fabricate an epitome of nature—we do not attempt so much. Professor Stanton of Bates went a-field on bird-walks because he loved the birds and because he loved God, his Father and the Maker of all good things. Thoreau was of the same school. "I never felt easy until I got the name of *Andropogon* (a certain kind of grass). I was not acquainted with my beautiful neighbor, but since I knew it was the *andropogon*, I have felt more at home in my native fields." The farmer who could find him

a hawk's egg or give him a fisher's foot he would wear in his heart of hearts, whether called Jacob or not. He saw a deep-world under foot. He believed the earth to be kind. He preached God in the living thing—free, full of song and full of beauty. How many times have I quoted this passage from Thoreau which seems to me to be perfect: "We are rained on and snowed on with gems. What a world we live in! Where are the jewelers' shops? There is nothing handsomer than a snow-flake and a dew-drop. I may say that the Maker of the world exhausts his skill with each snow-flake and dew-drop that he sends down. We think that the one mechanically coheres and that the other simply flows and falls; but, in truth, they are the products of enthusiasm, the children of an ecstasy, finished with the Artist's utmost skill."

And so, I am going—all along in these talks, so long as they continue—every now and then to preach the same sermon! Cultivate some avocation out-of-doors in the fields, among the birds, along the brooks, within sound of the manifold voices of God! Do it now. This is not a world of matter. It is not bounded by the Hohenzollerns on the North, the Hapsburgs on the south, the Romanoffs on the east and the Wilson-McAdoods on the west. This is a world of spirit, beauty, love, kindness. The resurrection is to come not out of the reeking tube of the big Bertha, but out of the throat of the birds and from the perfume of the fields. I would rather be like the little woman over in the Androscoggin County Savings Bank in Lewiston—Miss Miller by name—with what she knows of birds, than be a ruler with a throne, built on the bodies of those who were innocent. For the road to happiness and peace triumphant is to come by the way of the fields leading smilingly to happy homes.

ON "YOU NEVER CAN TELL TILL YOU TRY"



ONE DAY back in the beginning of time, a man stood by the bank of a river. He saw the fish a-swimming. Said he to himself, "Why hath the Lord denied to man the right to swim?" And he heard a voice out of the sky saying, "How do you know that man cannot swim? You never can tell till you try."

And so man swam. And so man has burrowed in mines. And so man has ventured out on the sea in boats. And so man has made iron swim on the seas in ships. And so he has gone down under the sea in submarines. And so he has beaten the birds, flying faster than the eagles.

It is not so much of the result as of the impulse, that I would speak. It is of smaller importance that man flies against the sun, than that he should believe that nothing is impossible until proven such. It is more to the purpose that we try than that we succeed. Failure may fortify us. We shall learn by trying. But if we never try, we surely shall never succeed and shall never have an average of accomplishment.

Thanks be to the Lord! The world has had certain men who have never believed in the impossible. They saw what the world needed and set about to supply the need. Experience—which is very blind as a rule—said: "It never has been done. There is a law of physics that makes it impossible. You will be wasting your time." But these men said, "I am not so sure. You never can tell till you try." It was proven incontestably that men could never conquer the air. The specific gravity of solids was such and such as compared with air! The lifting power of air-planes was such and such! The Idea! Nonsense! It could not be done. I could find you many absolute—and obsolete—proofs that machines never could be made that would

fly. But Prof. Langley and Wright Brothers and a few others said, "You never can tell till you try." And now we dip and dive in the ether like the hawk and swallow.

If you want to read a book that will put gumption into you in respect to trying to do things that scientists and wise men say are impossible, read Samuel Smiles' "Life of George Stephenson." Here was an uneducated man. He could not read until he was mature. He mended shoes and repaired clocks and tended the engine at the pit-mouth in the collieries in Northumberland. The coals were hauled on wooden or iron rails by horses. Stephenson believed that they could be hauled by what we now call the locomotive. The scientists said it was impossible. The capitalists said it was impossible. But Geordie Stephenson said, "You never can tell till you try." Read the story of that life. Read how he took up the impossibles and solved them. Read how this unlearned man actually invented the arts of locomotive-building, of railroad construction; how he flung the iron rails over morasses; how he pierced mountains in deep tunnels; how he constructed the locomotive against parliament and the mobs of English farmers protesting that it would blast the crops and spread famine thru the land. It will put the pep into you. It will make you believe—if nothing else will make you.

How can any man today dare say that anything in the physical world is impossible? Let him consider the Marconi wireless, the phonograph, the Atlantic cable, the newspaper-press, the aeroplane, the submarine, the mariner's compass! With the mysterious power of radium in the offing, who shall say that there will not be found new fields of wonder and achievement that today we do not glimpse, much less explore? We are like children in a palace of illusions! What we think are real are but appearances, what we think are

fixed laws, may be nothing of the sort. If thirty years ago a person had told you that you would see the day when you could photograph a man's liver thru his body, without taking the said liver out and hanging it on a nail, you would have said "go to." Surest thing that ever was—"you never can tell till you try."

So if I were a boy, and looked out on the world and saw things that the world needed—either as Edison, or as Joan of Arc, or as Billy Sunday, or as Michelangelo, or as Gutenberg or any other deliverer or helper of the race, I never would say, "It can't be done." Rather should I say, "You never can tell till you try and I am going to TRY." And it is this spirit that is fortifying the world today. We are doing things today that we never knew we could do until we tried—and all of them bringing mankind to higher levels thru effort that purifies and uplifts.

ON "THAT'S THE BOY OF IT"



WE WERE reading this from our old philosopher: "Your time is almost over, therefore, live as though you were on a mountain. Never run into a hole or shun company."

And then the man at the other desk in the office said, "That old Roman never went camping out, did he?"

This accords with what is happening in my backyard. The boys across the way came over the other night and asked, "Please may we put up our tent in your back yard? We will be quiet and won't make no noise nor nothin'."

"Go on," says I. "May you be happier than I ever was, living in a tent". And the tent is up and I can

hear mysterious sounds from it and see boys crawling out of it with wooden bowie-knives in their teeth and with red paint on their faces.

There comes a time in every boy's life when he wants to live in a tent. Nobody knows what stirring of nomadic blood leads them to this desire. It probably dates back to pre-historic ages when our forebears lived in tents. It is the call of the wild in the boy. But they are sure to have it and if repressed, it does harm. If a boy in my neighborhood wants to tent out and will agree to do it near home, he has my consent. Don't bother him. Let him have his fill. He will enjoy home the better, afterward.

You remember, perhaps, when you went camping out with some other boy. You talked about it for a month, yea, a year. You got a tent and worked like a little Injun to get money to have your belongings hauled to some convenient camping ground and you were dumped down with the world before you. A tent averages to be the hottest place in mid-day and the coldest place at midnight with two exceptions—hell and the north-pole. And it always rains. And someone always tells the boys to build a trench around the camp and they do and the trench fills up and backs up into camp and floats the bedding, and the green snakes crawl in and the earwigs and the ants want to go camping out and the noises are something awful nights. Every lion and tiger in the State of Maine comes prowling around and the rains are simply bitter. And the beans sour—nice beans that you were going to fall back on when game got scarce—and your matches get wet and you can't seem to get along without milk and cream and you are somewhat homesick. And the mosquitoes are thick and you want to go home and can't, because you were going to stay a week anyway. And you get a cold in your head and your feet are wet and then the man, on whose land you are camping, comes down and

asks you who in thunder ever gave you permission to camp on his land, and asks you if that is you who has been shooting a pistol at his cows, and tells you his charge is ten dollars for camping privileges anyway, and to fork over, and you have only eighty cents between you.

And your chum proves to have a bad temper and yours is no better, and you sit there crying into the wet pillow and you hear a voice outside and it sounds like Dad's, and he is saying, "Here they are, Joe;" and it IS Dad and your chum's Dad come over to see how the bold hunters are getting along.

"Well, boys," says Dad, "isn't this the fine place! Just getting to feel like home, I suppose? Fixed up nice and cosy, eh! Well! Well! This is great isn't it, Joe?" And they stay around a while and talk about coming over again next week to see you. And you feel like death until Dad says, "Of course, if you rather come home now and come over again and have another week some other time, say the word and we'll tote yer home."

And two weak little voices echo, "I guess that would be fine and dandy all right." And two happy boys bundle into Dad's arms and sleep all the way home. And that's the Boy of it.

ON "TRUNDLE BEDS"



OUR OLD friend, E. P. Ricker, of Poland Spring, was in this office a few days ago, talking about the days when they charged from \$2.50 to \$3.50 a week for board at the Mansion House at Poland Spring, and he said that perhaps it was enough, for the roof leaked and they had only a few rooms and a good many in a room. That was many, many years ago, when the first advertisement of Poland Water appeared in the Brunswick Telegraph, and the first circular was issued on Poland Water.

"I remember," said Mr. Ricker, "that I was sleeping on a trundle bed, and—"

Here is the place to stop quotation and ask a few questions. How many of our readers ever saw a trundle bed? How many know what a trundle bed is and why it got its name?

I can remember how a trundle bed looked, but I never slept in one and we never had one in the house, altho there was one at grandmother's house. Yet I suppose a good many of our readers will remember them and many have slept in them. They were little, low bedsteads for children, and of tremendous economy. They were called "trundle" because they could be trundled about the room and because it was the custom to slip them under the tall four-posters during the day-time so as to be out of the way. Those were the days when a sleeping-room was not exclusive. Few rooms, in spite of all of the land outdoors on which to build, was the custom! People slept in innocence and purity, several in a room. So when night came, out came the trundle bed from its nice, sanitary retreat under the family bedstead and all the household turned in, higgledy-piggledy!

The old-fashioned bed was a terrible thing—come to think of it. It is a wonder how they ever lived—our grandfathers and grandmothers—to such ripe old age without “influenza” and the grip, the pip and the teebes. The old-fashioned four-poster was as snug as a linen-closet in an August afternoon on the sunny side of a house with the thermometer at a hundred and ten. On going to bed in winter they used to warm up a bedpan, shut the windows, wind the clock, call in the cat, lock the shed door, put a log on the fire, tuck in the children, put on a flannel night-cap, get out the bed-steps, draw the bed-curtains, climb to the level of the bed, enter the sanctuary, sink about eleven feet into a feather bed and, pulling the curtains close about them, shut out any vagrant air and sink into pleasant dreams—no doubt. Night-air was accounted noxious, on account of the carbonic acid gas let out by vegetation. We used to hear so much about plants reversing the order of their exhalations after dark, that we used to be afraid of being caught out after sun-down for fear of being poisoned. They were wary folk—those old-timers.

But they survived it and so did the boys, sleeping in the trundle-beds, about four inches from the floor, where drafts ran around and the mice frolicked. To see three large, awkward boys, anywhere from six feet to seven feet long, inhabiting one trundle bed while pa, marm and two or three children inhabited the four-poster, was to see economy of space combined with dreamless sleep. You could hear those boys growing thru the night.

Trundle beds have gone, along with the old-fashioned side-board cradle with its wooden rockers, rattling a lullaby along the yellow-painted kitchen floor—mother’s toe agitating it as she knit the socks or spun the yarn with the flying wheel. How many people have seen a grandmother spinning in the twilight of the

evening by the firelight in an old-fashioned kitchen? I used to see a grandmother serenely doing this and smoking her pipe at the same time, innocently and sweetly—sanctifying tobacco in the purity of her life and the religion of her deep and abiding Faith. And how many have agitated the churn—the old dasher churn, when the butter refused to come; when good fishing waited outside with allurements for the impatient boy!

Times have changed and customs, also! Other things have gone with the trundle bed—some good, some bad. But what abideth is memory of the dearly beloved. We sat with them in the twilight, often, in blessedness of love. And angels' wings brushed our faces, tho we knew it not.

ON "PROGRESS AND WONDER"



LL THE WHILE that man fights man, in the world-struggle, a similar drama is going on in all animal life. Everywhere we see the unfolding of it, struggle between mates, struggle between rivals, and on the other hand we see love and growth.

It makes us wonder if we even faintly see the light in this world of wonder. If we should talk over what we ourselves have observed about animal behavior we would come to a common-ground of agreement that animals live on a scale of intelligent deportment that is, to say the least, a close resemblance to our own, and from it should take courage for the future.

Take the wonderful thing known as migration of birds. I have been reading in one of Prof. J. A. Thompson's lectures about the marvels of bird migra-

tion. They almost pass belief—how they make their long journeys at night with unabating speed; how they cross pathless seas; how they return to the very garden in which they nested the year before; how the young birds that never migrated before, set off alone and wait not for those who have gone before, but “change their season in a night and wail their way from cloud to cloud down the long wind.”

Or take, as this writer says, as another instance, the life history of the common European eel. It begins life below the 500 fathom line on the floor of the deep sea—in a dark, cold, calm, silent, plantless world. It passes to the surface as a flattened larva, quite transparent, and it lives in the open sea for over a year, not eating anything and growing rather smaller as it grows older. It becomes a young eel or elver, as it is called, which makes for the shore and journeys up the rivers. In spring or early summer, legions of these elvers pass up stream, obedient to their instinct to go right ahead as long as the light lasts. Before reaching such rivers as flow into the Eastern Baltic, the young eels have had a journey of fully 3,000 miles; for all of the eels of Northern Europe seem to have had their cradle in the Atlantic west of the Faroes, the Hebrides, Ireland, and Spain, where the continental plateau shelves deeply down to the great, silent depths. As the elvers pass up the streams, there is a separation of the sexes. The females go ahead farther up the streams; the males lag behind. Then follows a long period of growth in slow-flowing reaches of ponds and rivers. After some years of this new life, they all make the return journey to the sea and as far as is known, the individual-life ends in giving origin to new lives. There is never any breeding in fresh water; there seems to be no return for any eel from the deep sea—nothing but the succession of the coming elver and the departing eel, his life finished.

And all this goes on in spite of man and his petty wars. The impulse that sends the bird to the south and back again in summer to the north; the impulse that controls the migration of the European eel and all similar impulses are apparently sempiternal. We have as yet not the smallest conception of the ruling impulses of the world. We are all too apt to consider things solely from the standpoint of Man, and he is only a very small part of creation and by no means the most wonderful. The body of an ant is many times more visibly intricate than a steam-engine. Its brain, as Darwin said, is perhaps the most marvelous speck of matter in the universe. Scientists say that in a tiny organism no larger than the second hand of a watch there is a molecular intricacy that might be represented by an Atlantic liner packed with such watches.

Now—bear this in mind as the thought of this Talk. The word of all nature is Progress. There has never been an instance yet of retrogression in the system. Individuals and some types come and go—but the world plan is Progress. We do not know; cannot understand as yet what is the secret of Life, what is its destiny, but the person who sees the birds come and go, who knows of such mysterious influences as those which control the elver in his 3,000 mile journey to a place unseen hitherto, but unerringly found, cannot doubt that Man will find with the same unerring course, the Haven—which is a Heaven, somewhere. In the meantime let us wonder and wonder—for it is the spur to knowledge and the staff of faith.

ON "BEING THE WHOLE THING"



ARE you one of those business men who think that nobody else can do your work; that the business would stop if you went away for a few days? If so, mend your ways. If you are running the business that way, it is time for you to reorganize. No business should be at the mercy of one man.

Here is a true story. When the United States Steel business was re-organized and every one in Pittsburgh became a millionaire over night, by the formation of the gigantic United States Steel corporation, it happened that there was a man in the open-hearth steel plant who had been there many years and who was a faithful and efficient boss of his expert and highly intricate work.

In the sudden down-pour of riches, the happy officials thought of this man, and, seeking to reward him for his share in the success, they called him into the office, gave him a lot of money and told him that he had earned a vacation. "Go abroad a year," said they, "Your pay will go on as before on a big advance. Look over everything in steel-construction and steel-manufacture. Have a good time. Rest up and enjoy yourself."

The man went away and stayed six months. He had always been a worker; never a loafer. He had been a powerful, dominant man who attended strictly to business every day of the year, no vacations. He became restless, in Europe; he could stand it no longer; he set sail for home and one day stepped into the main-office of the U. S. Steel Co. and said: "How's things going?"

The manager looked up and said, "Rotten. Nobody here knows how to make open-hearth steel as it should be made. We have lost thousands and thousands of dollars by your absence."

"Gimme my overalls!" shouted the happy man, "I'm going back to work in three minutes."

"No, you are not," said the manager. "You are going back to Europe and stay there for the rest of your vacation. No one man is ever again going to put the U. S. Steel Co. in the hole that you have left it in. No man ought to run a department so that his assistant can't run it as well as he did. The measure of a man's efficiency in a department is results, both when he is there and when he is not. If his assistants can do the work better than he can, it goes to his credit; he has picked the men; he has taught them. We want no segregation of expertness in any one individual. In short, the excellence of a manager, is the degree to which he can disappear for brief seasons and return to find it running smoothly. We do not want the U. S. Steel Co. to shut down because, some bad day, you overeat and die."

This does not mean that business-men are not to attend to business. But what it does mean is that their efforts at running business must be directed in large affairs to man-selection and the proper apportioning of responsibility upon them. Hold them for results. Stand like Foch at the guidance and depend on men who shall have every opportunity to learn; on them shall be, under your larger guidance, the issue of success.

And bear this in mind, you will lose your punch if you permit yourself to go stale. To this end, frequent change, occasional variation of work, average number of vacations—all these are essential. A day or two in the open, out where bigger things than have ever developed in your factory are going on—out by the sea, or on the mountain top—all of these are required. Put the punch into yourself and into your assistants by consideration of the human need for rest and recreation. And don't forget that you are not—or should not be

indispensable to the degree that the business will suffer if you leave your desk for a few weeks in summer. Forget it. You are not the whole business unless the business can do very nicely in your absence. The system should be bigger than the individual.

ON "BEAUTY OF THE WORLD"



WE have talked together—if perchance I have any readers—about beauty, feeling as I do, that it is deeper than the surface and a part of a divine plan. For Beauty, as I take it, is a foreshadowing on earth of the ultimate development of mankind after death, an earthly beatitude, expressed in form.

So Beauty is no mere accident of form and habit. It is as a phrase in the infinite harmonies, a movement in the song of the heavenly chorus, heard a little in advance. It is brother to Truth and Justice, it is perfection, here and there, displayed. It is an echo of the rhythm that moves in and thru all creation. The omnipresence of beauty in all finished and normal life, must have some meaning. Even if it signify nothing more than that it arouses something within us that responds pleasurably to nature—that is worth while. "Thou hast ordered all things in measure and number and weight! Thou hast made all things beautiful, in their season."

The whole world is beautiful. Its very beauty proves that it could not have come by chance. From the crystal to the flower, there is plan and order. The sea beating against the shores; the wide stretches of the fields; the azure of the skies; the rugged storm clouds, built up against an evening sky; the gold of a

perfect sunset; the beauty of a dawning day; the stars that sweep overhead at night; the moon, on summer seas; the mountains thrown against a dazzling sky; the silver tips of peaks remote, diamond-studded; the sweep of storm thru city streets with eaves groaning and night winds sobbing; the brooks that sing along the forest paths; the birds in brilliant colors—what is all this prodigal display of perfect loveliness, but the work of some Divine influence making this the abode of loveliness, as the vestibule to glories yet to be?

And there is no common thing that hath not its loveliness. We brush aside the common weeds, seen so often that we do not notice them and yet, if we take time some day, when we are sitting by some wayside spring, to examine them, we shall find them beautiful, intricate, full of individuality. Their parts are perfectly correlated and well adapted to their surroundings. They have means of protection and of development. They are of a race perhaps older than our own. We see the bee come to them and find his sweet—the beautiful, golden bee adorned in colors that do not fade. If we enter into the laboratory of the weed, we find beauties of plan, mysteries of evolution that fill us with awe. It is true, as the poet says, "Little flower! If I could but understand what you are, root and all, and all in all, I should know what God and Man is."

I do not want this loveliness to escape notice of those who read casually the newspaper as it comes and goes. Some things are abiding. This earth is not all of it. Everything is wonderful if you will but observe. "I believe that a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars," says Walt Whitman, "and the pismire is equally perfect; and the grain of sand and the egg of the wren; and a tree-toad is a chef-d'oeuvre of the highest; and the running blackberry would adorn the parlours of heaven; and the narrowest hinge on my

hand puts to scorn all machinery; and the cow munching with depressed head surpasses any statue; and the mouse is a miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels."

ON "PASTURES"



BROWN, gray, green or even white with winter snow, what is lovelier than a Maine pasture, with a knoll on it!

And we prefer them, do we not, with a pine-tree on that knoll, whispering things about strange places with the winds that have been everywhere and seen everything. We like them also that give glimpses of casual pond or lake so that we can lie with our head on a stone, as Jacob did at Bethel, and see visions, in the sky and on the shining waters.

A Maine pasture must—simply must—be entered by a gate with bars that let down and it should have low juniper, granite boulders, occasional velvety patches, a sand-bank, and a familiar path that leads to the heights. If it be an "institutional" pasture, so to speak, it may have a picnic grove in it. I have such a one in mind, called "Bibber's Woods," where a whole town went on hot afternoons in summer and looked far down into a valley in which a stream wound along like a silver ribbon. The cows came up and joined us at sunset and nobody ever left the bars down. I suppose that the portable saw mill has murdered these living trees before this.

I like a pasture in the spring, when ninety-nine per cent of the snow is gone; when the earth is quite warm and when the mayflower is to be found. It takes the expert to find the mayflower "down underneath,"

always in certain definite spots, remembered of last year, among long grasses in the most hidden places, known only to you. They are old friends. But one does not go mayflowering if memories are too potent and come with tears—curly-headed, fairy-like little girl, running about here and there, your companion and pal—now alas, too staid and sophisticated at seventeen to go mayflowering with dad. Ah! The visions of children with flowing hair, that people every pasture, even those by the home fireside.

We love the pasture for its silences. The swallows fly low over the pasture knolls, the bluebird sings upon the fence-rail and the drowsy tinkling of the cow-bells lulls us to dreams. One can stretch out here in the sunshine as on his mother's bosom. The sunlight, thru ash and poplar, filters in over our pastures of New England as nowhere else. Mere fields are stubble; forests are obscure and mystic. The presence of the Lord is in the deep woods; but out here the angels of peace and the good fairies seem to play, and they draw light out of the west and run with it helter-skelter over the knolls and into the valleys. One can hardly despair in a pasture, whatever his memories. It is too bright and open for despair.

I like the pastures even in winter. The snow blows over them and lays them as with a white table-cloth. It lies in shelving ridges, with edges overhanging and overlapped like mother of pearl in the deep sea shell. The pines sing louder in winter. There are open tracks of the rabbit or fox. The snow declines to build against the trunks of certain trees, for what reason I do not know, and often there are bare and dry spots where you may sit at your hazard and look abroad. There will be a thousand things to see, from grass culms to the lichens, glistening in the moist winter days. Where the sun beats down you can almost see spring stirring—yea, the infinity of springs.

Maine pastures are incomparably lovely but mostly unappreciated. We scarcely know how rare they are. How one hungers after them, when away from them. Think of the weary sage-brush or the dull, dreary stretches of the sea of corn-fields of the West. By the side of these the Maine pasture is as elysium. And such sunsets! From a Maine pasture they pick up new glories. The dull earth lends itself to emphasis of jades and golds, and especially the upper end of the spectrum, carmines and crimsons. As a proscenium, even the sea is trivial and the mountain-top is melodrama as compared with the perfect setting of the simple pastoral to the watcher of the skies, with pillowed head upon the knoll beneath the whispering pine as the sun sinks slowly down in glory!

No wonder the psalmist sang of them—the pastures of Heaven. “He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters; he restoreth my soul.”

ON “THINKING TWICE”



NEVER did a thing in a hurry that I did not regret it. Almost everyone has had the same experience and, by being in a hurry, does not mean having a quickstep, about things—it is the mind that you must not hurry! Hurry your feet, all you like; so long as feet or hands do not outrun the operations of your brains. If they do, look out. You are hurrying and must take your chances of accident.

I am tending a furnace. It is not a job that I went into the primaries to get. I did not go about telling what an all-fired good furnace-tender I was and am. I

fell into the office by a fancied fitness for it on the part of my wife. She decided that here was an office for which I was just about suited and she elected me by a majority of one vote, my vote "contrary-minded" not counting.

The other night, I decided that the water was low in the boiler and that I would fill it. This steam-plant is a new one to me. We had not been properly introduced. I found the right wheel to turn and turned it and went about my other business of piling in the coal and then I took out a lead pencil and sat on a barrel and began to write a little thing that came into my noddle, and then I went out and got an ash-barrel, and then I went up-stairs and forgot all about the wheel that I had turned and all about the water that was running into the boiler, by a one-inch pipe.

You see I have not hurried, up to this point. To be sure, I worked a little ahead of my brain, but then I was not hurrying. My brain simply was failing to register. It needed a new needle or a fresh record or the crank needed to be wound up. Nobody's fault, as yet.

I ate my supper and dawdled. I went down to the public library and got a couple of books on Freedom of the Seas—forgetting the freedom of the water running all of the while into my boiler—I should say, rather, into the boiler up to the house, for, if it had been my very own boiler, I should have noticed it. I went home and sat down by the radiator. Then I heard a sound! A sizzling. Then! Oh, then, I began to hurry.

Now, if I had not hurried; if I had stopped and mopped my brow and recited a few verses of Omar; and drawn up a definite plan of procedure in case of flood, it would have been all right. But as a matter of fact, I sky-hooted for the cellar as tho a yaller dog (one of Al Sweet's)—had had me in a place where I could not fail to notice. It was an instant's work to shut off the

water. I had no plan. The water was oozing out of the joints. The fire was beautiful—best fire for weeks.

Now, if my mind had not hurried in the first place; if I had enjoyed the confidence of a professional, I would have known where the pipe was, for drawing off the water. I did not. I had hurried my job. My feet and hands had outrun my brain and my self-conceit had outrun both. I accordingly turned a valve in a pipe, hitherto considered useless, and out of it streamed a yard of boiling water. After that, all is a dream. I drenched in steam; boiled in water and stewed in self-abnegation. Then the dammed pipe—please notice that this is not swearing—ceased to run. I bailed the cellar out and it was eleven o'clock and no sign of the recession of water in the glass. It still showed chock-full.

Then I did something again in a hurry. It was awful. I took a stilson wrench and took off the pet-cock on the water level to make a bigger flow of water. You don't know what I did! Neither do I, now. But the minute I did it and the water and steam began to roar and the water rose on the floor and I began to run to and fro leaping to the fray with water buckets of scalding water, which I poured on the lawn, I knew that I had hurried. For how in the name of Jupiter Pluvius, Boiling Hot, was I ever to get the pet-cock back. If allowed to run it would empty the entire boiler; we should all be blown sky-high. And I could not put in a threaded screw against four pounds of red-hot steam and forty pounds boiling-water pressure. I prayed! And the water sprayed also. My feet were boiled. My brain was stewed. My hands were parboiled. My wits were a ragout.

Here is my point. I took two minutes off for consultation with my laggard mind. I called it back into my presence—presence of mind, antidote for being in a hurry, otherwise being rattled. "The hair of the dog

is good for the bite," says I; "I will give her cold water." I did. The pipe from the cold ran into the hot at a junction-point; the water ran cold out of the fool vent tha I had made; I attacked it with the pet-cock and the stilson.

I draw the veil over the struggle. That water, eighty pound pressure, took me in the mouth, the ears, up my sleeves, thru the waistcoat, out of the small of my back, thru my liver and into my Spanish Influenza. I was Noah with no ark. There was only one comfort; my wife did not see it. But I conquered just before sinking into a watery grave.

MORAL: Think twice before you start anything.

ON "THE WAYSIDE LILY"



YOU go upon the streets on an August day, or pass by train thru the towns between Lewiston and Brunswick, you see boys with masses of pond-lilies—the loveliest of water-flowers, ivory, with hearts of gold, finer than the goldsmith ever fashioned.

Often from the train window, you may see the place whence these flowers come. They lie, white in the morning sun and glistening with the dew, along the river bank, in the Androscoggin River, at Lisbon Falls.

How many people know that these flowers were placed in the river by Edward Plummer of Lisbon Falls, who was a big man in his day and who presumably had "too much business" to bother with "flowers"? He built railroads; ran lumbering operations on the Big River; handled crews of men all the way from the Magalloway to the boom at Lisbon Falls; did a big saw-mill business and was a dreamer also, conceiving and

pushing thru the railroad into the heart of the lumber-regions of the Rangeleys, years and years ago.

Mr. Plummer brought the roots of these lilies down home from distant ponds and put them in good ground in the placid waters by the shore. And there they have grown and multiplied and now they gem the green shores of the stream and lie out there in all the glory of God's own beauty—the suggestion of the utility of perfume and of loveliness.

We perpetuate our names oftener by the acts of thoughtfulness for those who are to come after us, than in any other way. The man who plants elms by his roadway is of the same school as Mr. Plummer. These men do not expect to be remembered but someone sits some day grateful in their shade; looks up thru the branches, hears the birds sing and sees them nesting in the branches, and he breathes a prayer for the soul of the man who planted the tiny tree. Perhaps the prayer and blessing reach farther on the way to the throne, than prayers bought and paid for in coin, less enduring than the lilies of the placid stream and the leaves of the spreading elm.

You recall, somewhere, the wayside spring. You stop to lave in its cool waters or drink from its running stream. Someone put the bed of the spring there and welled it for your refreshment. The birds come and drink. The wayside dog laps at the rivulet that runs thru the dusty road away from the shade that follows the running water. All nature gives thanks. Do these fail to reach the throne? Does the little child that buries his face in the perfume of the pond-lily ever forget it? And long years after, possibly, may he not be stirred to some childhood memory and some return to the simpler things of innocence and virtue by the influence of the flower?

This is not all bunkum—I believe. The good Lord made flowers and running waters and brooks and trees

to have their sway over human lives. Here and there a man lives, who feels these things and practices the religion of service to others in the simpler way. He leaves behind him, not alone memorials of the material things of life,—stocks, bonds, factories and automobiles—but even things that go on living after he has gone. The grove of pines that he has saved from the portable mill and deeded to the town in perpetuity, where tired mothers may go in the hot afternoon and there, with their children beside them in safety, find the rest and comfort that otherwise might be denied them; the play-ground of the boys; the old brook that weaves so closely into memory after the weary years have fled.

And so the pond-lily that the boys sell on the streets, suggests all this and much more which you may add of your own reflection, with the single thought "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

ON "TABLE MANNERS"



YEARS ago it was good form to eat with your knife. And there was a reason. It was a long advance on the etiquette that insisted that "fingers were made before forks."

It never seems to old-fashioned folk that the indictment of the table-knife as a food-freighter was well-taken. It was no mean accomplishment to "eat with the knife." It took dexterity, for instance, to eat peas with an old-fashioned steel table-knife, and a technical aptitude at it was as difficult as playing the piano. Most of my gray-haired readers—if I have any left—recall men who had a knife-tech-

nique that was swift, sure, accurate and profound. It always seemed cruel, to their presence, to insist upon change of style. Nothing was more beautiful than to see a full load of food balanced on a knife in mid-air, halted on its way to doom while the artist delayed a bit, to discuss with another kindred soul, similarly halting, such profound subjects as "The Immortality of the Soul" or the details of Predestination. There were men in those days who could even gesture with a knife-load and never spill a bean.

But they have mostly gone, those old experts. The few that exist are called sword-swallowers and are either ostracised altogether or are eating at the second table. The same thing has happened to those who drink out of their saucers and go to table in their shirt sleeves and drink out of the finger bowls. [Years ago, it was not simply permissible to drink out of the "sasser"—it was an accomplishment.] To see a man pour his tea into his saucer and cool it off and then lift it with firm touch and sip it with a long, soothing, sibilant, gurgling, fugue-like cadence that could be heard in the next county, was to see and hear the proper thing. The louder noise he could make, the more desirable dinner-guest he was considered. If he wanted to do a little fin-de-siecle flourish, he dipped his gingerbread in the tea in his saucer and then played a solo in double-bass with it thru his mustache. And then if he were a true artist and could wipe his mustache on his coat sleeve daintily—daintily, mark you—without the slightest suggestion of coarseness but with that infinite considerateness that betokens the saving of napkins, he was worth while; for napkins were rarely given out except to the minister.

I do not think much has been gained by lowering the napkin from the chin to the base of the stomach. A bishop who wears a raw-silk apron was asked at a dinner party where I once was, "What has most im-

pressed you since you became a bishop?" "Madam," he replied, "the one thing that has most impressed me since becoming a bishop is the ease with which my napkin slips out of my lap." All of these things have merely taken the freedom out of feeding. It only amounts to a greater hardship when by travel or adversity or return to frontier conditions, one has to eat as men eat in the raw. Of course we have progressed in table manners in some respects, since the days when the person who could reach farthest, fared best,—but not in all respects. The best table manner is happiness, and it is to be doubted if we are getting any more of that than we did in the old days when there was less restraint and more fun. Laugh, joke, have fun and frolic—that is the best table manner. A solemn butler is guaranteed to give the average man angina pectoris at the age of fifty. There is no nervous dyspepsia where there is good humor, no talk of business, no silences, no bickerings between husband and wife, no repression of the natural sport of childhood, no fault-finding over food.

I do not deprecate dainty eating. But it makes little difference which fork a man uses for spearing his oysters. Table-manners are matters of passing fashion. Neatness, clean-washed faces, clean apparel and common decency with happiness go further than much flummiddie and many folderols. And best of all—is enlightening and diverting talk. Give us that and—dear stranger coming to dine with me—you may eat with your knife and sip from your saucer, so long as you do it as to the table-manner born.

ON "FRACTIONS HERE AND THERE"



HERE is just one little red-cheeked, lovable girl, eight years old, over against me, and our heads are very close together, for she is studying fractions.

Eheu, fugaces labuntur anni! Dear old Horace! The years passed no doubt, swiftly away by the side of the cool waters of the Digentia in his Sabine Hills, but not more swiftly than to one who sits with a girl of two braids of chestnut hair, conning fractions once again.

Are we in the twilight all together, friends tonight? And do we whose hair is whitened,—others may have no interest in this evening's talk—consider the days when "the rule of three perplexes me and fractions drive me mad." Did you ever go to a little red-schoolhouse? Did you ever go to a schoolhouse that had any paint on it whatever? Did you ever see the stove funnel get red-hot? Did you ever see the late afternoon shadows lengthen on the blackboard and the sun's last rays shine on the very problem that you missed on? And was that not a fraction? There is a boy over in the back seat there. Do you know him? He has hair that sticks up desperately over his head. He has a suit of clothes that is reminiscent of the Civil War. He has warts—mention them not. He has freckles—gold-be-spattered spangles of out-door life. He has cow-hide boots. He is scratching on a slate. His face is working into weird contortions. You do not know him. You never can know him. He was a part of you and yet is no more. He was of you and with you and you with him; but he has gone with the passing years. You lived in him and of him—you know not how—but O! so different. You lived with him as a Conqueror! A Prince of the Realm; a Leader of Armies; the Greatest

Baseball Pitcher; Proprietor of a Candy Shop; President of the United States; the King of Sleuths; Daniel Boone and Nick Whiffles. Is that little lad your Fraction or are you his Fraction?

Fractions are proper, improper, even vulgar. Which are you? You owed something to that little boy—who has gone with Horace's fleeting years. Do you dare to go up to that little boy in the back seat there studying fractions and whisper your name into his ear and tell him how you have turned out in the process of reducing life to the common denominator of manhood? Can you take him on your knee—your earlier self—with all those dreams, hopes and fancies of boyhood greatness and tell him that, all in all, you have done your best, lived straight; done your additions and your divisions according to rule? Can you truthfully say that, such as you are, you have been fair to the little boy and his dreams and that the only trouble was that his dreams were too big for you to accomplish, because there are but few places nowadays for Napoleons?

My little girl over opposite me cannot quite understand why we cannot add a fourth and a fifth together without making them twentieths, especially as I translate all fractions into mince-pie. But she will some day. She will learn that, in the great problem of the world, it is necessary in adding this fraction of a human being to that, this fourth part of a proper man or woman to that fifth part of a proper man or woman, we must reduce them to the common denominator of the human soul. She will know that when we try to add one Kaiser to four social democrats, it will be necessary to find out how much Man there is in each of them. Only when she does this will she know what the answer to the problem may be. She cannot understand yet why, if you multiply the denominator and get a bigger figure, the fraction grows smaller.

But she will—some day when she sees a man who makes his denominator hoarded dollars—wrung from people, sneaked out of circulation and beneficence just to make a big bank-balance. She will see how by multiplying his denominator, the fraction of this man becomes smaller and smaller.

Dear little girl of two braids! Life has everything—fractions, units, mixed numbers, proportions; questions and answers for you—all waiting. For us whose hair is white with years most of the answers are written—all but One!

ON "KEEPING A DOG"



THIS is according to how you accent the verb. If you really want to keep a dog, why you probably can, provided he is the kind of a dog that you can keep. Some dogs just wander off, and then you are in luck unless your wife insists on offering a reward. Then you will get your dog back and usually two or three more. A dog has his times and seasons for wandering. Maybe he is off after a bone. I had a dog once—a wooly-eared dog that bit the legs of all thin people, under the impression, as I always believed, that they were animated bones. It was lucky that the dog died, before short skirts came. Long skirts cover a multitude of bones.

This dog of mine disliked the gas man and the man who came to take our electric-light meter. He bit them regularly—or irregularly; I mean that he bit them regularly as they came and irregularly as to place. He was an intelligent dog and seemed to appreciate his duty to me. Even tho mistaken in his methods, he plain'y sought to relieve me of apparent burdens due to

gas-bills and electric light bills. If I had had two dogs, like him, I might have had one of them biting at the back door and one at the front. As it was, well, the dog wasted a good many of his bites.

It is easier to keep two dogs than it is to keep one. You do not miss one of them when he is away and you are not running around hunting for a dog. And hunting for a restless dog is a man's job. The dog may be here now, and the next hour, he may be there. It would take two motor-cycles and a side-car, to keep run of some dogs. So, if you can arrange it so that by having several dogs, you don't miss one or two of them when they fail to come around after their meals, you will get along better.

Remarks about a dog ruined Pudd'nhead Wilson. Said he, "If I owned half of that dog, I would kill my half." How could a man own half of a dog and if he did, which half would he own? And if he killed half of a dog, wouldn't he be killing the other half, too, and what good is half of a dog, any way? He's a darned fool," said the people of the country village, "a reg'lar pudd'nhead."

Of course there is something about a dog that steals into your affection. If you have a real dog it is always a question of whether you own the dog or he owns you. He comes into the house and muddies the rugs and brings in his strange out-of-door suggestions and all of the sand in the vicinity and occasional beef-livers and odds and ends of neighbors' apparel and a few rare insects, but when he snuggles up and puts his nose in your hand and looks up with loving brown eyes, you rather like him. My dog had a fondness for collecting things. His specialty was goloshes. He would bring me home an odd overshoe about once a week. He found them on door-steps. I tried to train him to bring me home a pair of them—even practiced with him in teaching him to take up two at once. But he never

seemed to get the idea. That is where Pudd'nhead Wilson comes in. I would have liked to have killed that half of my dog. What I wanted was a two-over-shoe dog, if I was going to have any.

Some day, some one will invent a dog that will be a satisfactory house dog. I never saw one yet; but there will be one, when we have everything safe for democracy and dogocracy. I feel it in my bones. That dog will never wander from home; he will not bark at neighbors' automobiles; he will not engage in rough fights; he will not kill chickens; he will not catch the mange; he will not bite telephone men; he will not have fits; he will not come in dripping wet and leap in the lady's lap; he will not steal out of the pantry; he will not dig up the front lawn; he will not dig up neighbors' front lawns; he will not howl when the church bell rings; he will not bury beef-bones behind the parlor sofa; he will not disseminate fleas among the children; he will not go away with pedlers. Apart from the few imperfections, a dog is all right now. But when McAdoo has more time, we want him and Sam Gompers to take up the matter of the dog and make him so that any man will as soon have an automobile as try to keep a dog.

ON "MAN'S NECKTIES"



NECKTIE is a thing of beauty on the bosom of a man.

I am wrong and will begin again—a necktie is a butterfly under a man's chin. On thinking the definition over carefully, it yet seems open to criticism—there are few white butterflies and almost none that are black. A necktie is a tie for a man's neck. Let it go at that; only it is not for his neck, at all. It is for his shirt-front and

his neck sticks up above it, like a sore thumb out of a bandage, and his Adam's apple wears the nap off of it and there is no real connection between a necktie and a neck except certain neighborly proximity. And you can't tie a man's neck. You can only tie his collar. As well call a "collar button" a neck-button as call a collar-tie a necktie.

Adam wore no necktie. If for no other reason than this, he should have been happy and left forbidden fruit alone. When Adam got up in the morning—why there he was! You see. No collar-button to hunt for; no necktie to select. And then, too, Adam did NOT have to hunt to find whether his union suit was inside or out. A large sign should be printed on the seat of each union suit, "This side up with Care." There is nothing more sad in modern life than the way union suits behave in the night. You take them off and lay them carefully away right side up. And in the night they squirm around and turn themselves inside out. I have gotten up suddenly in the night and caught them at it.

I have been studying the life of Abraham lately. I wonder if he wore a necktie. None of his pictures show him as such. Noah wore a blouse open at the back. In all of the pictures I have seen, Noah gives evidence of having had to be hooked up by his wife every morning. I suppose he adopted this kind of a costume for purposes of natatorial exercises in case the ark sprung a leak.

There is no evidence of the time when the necktie came into vigorous fashion. Have you looked at a picture of G. Washington lately? Do you know what kind of necktie he wore? Well, I will tell you. I have before me the pictures of the first seven Presidents of the United States. Every one of them wore either a white shirt and white stock or else a high dickey and a black stock. Not one of them yielded to the plea of

the haberdasher, "Here is something new in a beautiful crushed strawberry effect." Old Hickory's collar came up above his ears and he wore black stock enough to clothe a High School girl of today for three years—all except her boots.

There is no question today that if the same freedom can be secured in everything else as there is in selection of one's necktie, the world is going to be very safe for democracy which will be just as varied as neckties. There is nothing now, no law whatever—to prevent a red-headed man from wearing a red and green necktie. In fact, they generally do. Gamblers are now perfectly free to wear long, flowing white string ties; like William Jennings Bryan, who is equally at home in a black string tie. No statesman except Ham Lewis would think of wearing anything but a black string tie. I notice that both of our Maine senators have taken to them like ducks to water. A real old-fashioned dyed-in-the-wool, back-to-the-people statesman like Joe Cannon, wears a little black bow tie, ready-made, that goes on with an elastic and tucks under a paper collar—a very neat style never wholly effaced. Woodrow Wilson usually wears a black four-in-hand; that is professional. Ministerial gentlemen used to wear white neckties. They passed on save in a few wayside pulpits with the Prince Albert coat and the high hat. There was a time when a man would not have known if he really had religion without a white necktie.

It is odd that George Creel and Secretary Baker and Hoover have not as yet indicated what we are to do about neckties. We do not really need them. We could wear our old socks in place of them. Think it over, Hoover. They are pure waste!

ON "MAKING AN IMPRESSION"



GOOD many years ago I went fishing at Moosehead Lake with Seth Chandler, later Mayor of Lewiston. We visited Jim Ham on North Bay, a remote farmhouse with no roads approaching it within many miles, and reached only over the highway of the bound-

ing seas, in the then omnipresent birch canoe. Jim had carved his homestead out of the deep woods and in a field of blackened stumps raised corn, wheat, potatoes, and strawberries, so big that, as he used to say, he had to "have a cant-dog to turn 'em over so that they would ripen on both sides."

One virgin morn we poked the nose of our canoe—my first mile in any canoe—into the nose of Duck Cove and there, under the dry-ki, we saw more trout than I ever saw before or since, a wiggling mass of "black backs," feeding unmolested. Jim threw in the old line, tied to an alder pole and began "derrickin' 'em out," throwing trout thirty feet over his head and shouting at the top of his voice, "the trouts is a climbin' of the trees."

Such a day! A happy, hearty day with a weary ending as at night, tired and happy with unaccustomed labor and adventure, we came home to the little frame house standing all alone in the clearing. We expected to see only the familiar household, but not so! In the Moosehead country, in those days, "company" was company and must be seen and heard, and so, by some mysterious telegraphy out of nowhere, the friends of Jim and his dear, sweet wife had gathered to see the visitors. There were Hams from far and near; from Dover and Foxcroft; from Seboomook and Socatean; from Greenville and Kineo, sons and daughters, sons-in-law and sisters-in-law and a great supper in the

old kitchen which was also sitting room and parlor.

I slept that night in the "spare room," altho of course it was not "spare" at all, being constantly in use and the Lord knows whom I pre-empted. It was on the ground floor, right off the kitchen, the door of thin pine opening outward, as happens to be of importance in this recital. I was to room alone, a remarkable consideration, for, as I looked back into the kitchen and saw all the Hams sitting there smoking or knitting, I wondered what necromancy of figures could accommodate so many in so few rooms in so tiny a house on so great a pond.

I shall never forget that bed-time—my introduction to the mysteries of a night by the greatest of all our inland lakes. There was a distant throb in the world. It seemed to sound like the sibilant breathing of the great soul of the Moosehead country. I noticed it as I took off my boots—a sort of throbbing and rustling as of Pan, the great god. I noticed it as I further disrobed, in manner not to be detailed. I noticed it as I stood there in the cold, sharp air of May-time, in my night shirt; for those were pre-pajama days. I noticed it as I gazed out of the window on the star-lit night. I noticed, too, that it did not seem all to be out of doors. Some of it seemed to come from under the bed. It was a low, ghostly sort of sound. It sort of rustled and guttered like a slithering It. The odor of it was prehistoric, methought. I would investigate, and I did. Taking the tallow candle in my hand, I softly lifted the bed-valance and peered beneath. I saw IT; IT saw me. With a leap there bounded forth with one almighty growl about 48 pounds of gray and white dog—wild to strangers and especially to me at that moment, and I leaped, three paces in advance, for the kitchen, where sat Jim and his wife and Frank and his best girl, and Ernest and his sister, and two neighbors and their families of bashful, bouncing daughters

from over Kineo way and a few social callers from Greenville, forty miles down the lake.

My entree into the Ham circle is still told in Piscataquis county. There may be more sudden things than the unannounced entree of the star visitor with fifty pounds of dog hanging to his shirt-tail, but in a quiet and ordinarily calm circle, such a thing may pass as an epoch. "My God!" said Mother Ham as she raised her hands, fell backwards in her old rocker and went heels up, in a most unladylike position. "Hi, Bose! Goddlemighty!" yelled Jim, as he grabbed at the dog. I leaped over the prostrate form of Mrs. Ham and landed in the arms of Frank's best girl. As I flew, the dog waved behind me like the starry flag on a nor'west wind, and as he went along, he took my shirt.

I suppose that, right here, we ought to draw the veil, but they were wearing nightshirts short in those days and there wasn't any veil except what the dog had and I did not feel competent to regain it. So I buried myself in the voluminous folds of Frank's best girl's gown until Mrs. Ham recovered her equilibrium and threw a bed-quilt over me, enabling me to make apologies and compliments to the ladies and to retire.

I came home and wrote this story for the newspaper, thirty-five years ago, in which, as I recall it, I remarked that we had been most cordially and warmly received at the Ham Farm and that all of them, the ladies included, united in saying that they could not see too much of me.

It is my opinion that if you are going to make an impression, it is best to make a good one. This is one of mine.

WHAT THIS DAY REALLY MEANS

Victory Day, November 11, 1918.



THE END of the war!

The German Empire, proclaimed for world domination three generations ago, has fallen. Instead of majestic triumphs along Unter den Linden, with captives drawn at the chariot wheels of the Hun, we see the Hohenzollerns fleeing to the shelter of neutral land in far deeper ignominy than ever fled Napoleon. A German Commune, like that which swept with anarchy and rapine thru the streets of Paris nearly fifty years ago, carries the red flag today in Berlin. We are living years in a day. And along the streets of this Free People of America, the sounds of rejoicing are heard on every hand.

The breakdown of German autocracy; the end of this gigantic world-war; the flight of the Imperial Hohenzollerns to realms altogether "in the Dutch" are events of staggering significance. But these are not the whole of it. To us, the events of the day and hour carry a far deeper significance in the things that abide with the Almighty God.

Every person who knows anything about the fundamental philosophy and religion of Germany, knows well that from the days of Ferdinand Christian Bauer, down to the latest expositor, there has been a relentless effort in Germany to rob the Bible of all its supernatural and spiritual suggestion. God has been driven not only from the temples, but also from the schools, the homes, the hearts, of the people, so far as autocracy could do it.

In its place, has been put the gigantic Superman superstition of Nietzsche, Trietshke and Bernhardt. Haeckel and Von Hartmann, and scores of smaller skept-

tics and agnostics have preached their odious doctrines of materialism and boldly asserted that any means was justifiable in the attainment of the world-dominion of Germany. Such horrid doctrine did the eminent German preacher, Pastor W. Lehmann, proclaim to a great congregation—that “Tho it may sound proud, yet will I say that the German soul is God’s; it shall rule over all mankind.”

It is this ogre, this blasphemous and debasing travesty on Christianity, that has fallen. It was time. An impious philosophy, married to efficiency, had reared a hellish brood. These, also, have been driven out of Germany in this amazing debacle. To us, the spiritual vandalism, resulting from the emasculation of God; the Germanizing of Christ and the consequent Godlessness of the ruling element of German Nationalism, are of far deeper significance than the Kaiser’s personality. Hands dripping with blood of Belgium as they hide the pitiable face of the Hohenzollern, fleeing from the throne of his fathers, are not more stained than those which pointed the way of blood from the pulpits or set the lessons of impious atheistic teachings before little children in a happy land. They deliberately robbed the German people of a living God and in His place set up a German god, soulless, military, lustful of power. “The German soul is God’s; it shall rule over mankind.”

And so we say—it is not alone a tyranny over the political welfare of a people that falls today. It is the tyranny over thought, pure aspiration, and the sweet and precious belief in the Sermon on the Mount, that falls with the ruins of that mighty political empire. Democracy is henceforth to be determined not in the currency of Nietzsche but in that of Saint Paul. Human brotherhood is to be defined, not by a God with a German soul, but by a God who is a universal Father as expressed by Him who died on Calvary.

No longer shall a nation teach from its pulpits its own exclusive partnership with a merciless God and a lustful Savior. The eyes of the German people are today opened. The fraud is exposed. The superstition of the Superman is dead. The German people themselves see it today—else why did God forsake them in battle? A false philosophy, the most dangerous and pernicious ever conceived since the beginning of man, has met its end. Had it persisted, the world would have been enslaved; Faith would have died; Christ would have become a myth and God a soulless mockery—the mask of a German ego, conceived in lust and born amid slavery and murder!

Celebrate! There never was a day like it before since Earth began to turn within the realm of space! It is the restoration of Brotherhood! It is the attestation of God's loving care! It is the apotheosis of human happiness. They must be celebrating it in Heaven!

ON "A CERTAIN FORM OF LAZINESS"



WHEN I was a boy, my mother used to say to me, "What in the world are you doing? I never saw so lazy a boy in all my life. You just sit and sit and sit, doing nothing."

And I would say, "I am not doing nothing. I'm at work. I'm thinkin'."

I believe there was some philosophy in my remark, altho at the time it was made, I rather think that it was an evasion. There was philosophy in it because boys all need time to be lazy. They have a right to lie in the sand, wiggle their bare toes, look at the clouds in wonder and merge their souls in the infinite. You don't

really understand boys if you think they are made for nothing but to lug in wood; tote well-water; lug out ashes and study books. They need time to get acquainted with a boy's world.

You don't understand boys very well if you forget that they have problems. You don't understand them if you think that they are not obliged in the nature of things to get a basis on which, later in life, to do business as men. There is a regular course thru which boys have to go. They have to loaf a lot. They have to fish. They have to roam the woods searching for acorns and beechnuts. They have to trap squirrels. They have to build snow-forts. They have to fight a lot. They have to set up stores for sale of household necessities at heavy loss. They have to give shows in the barn. They have to speculate in taws. They have to play hookey. They have to go camping-out. They have to keep rabbits. They have to own a dog. They have to swim, a lot. They have to play certain games. They have to do all these things and a lot more in order to fulfill a boy's destiny. And it is wrong to deny them these things. And they have to think a lot, lazily and idly, and their thoughts are as full of wonder and mystery as are yours, O philosopher and pedant, wondering beneath the stars—in the face of the Infinite!

Laziness is not an absolute sin. At most it is negative badness and often it is nothing but a panacea for the wounded nerves. Boys have nerves. They have awful attacks of them. You just don't know a boy if you can't make allowance for his nerves. He comes home all tired out with school. He works like a little beaver at lessons. His tight little nervous system is all frayed out. You better look out and give him room to compose himself. Give him leeway to be lazy. Give him right of way in which to do nothing. He will live longer and grow bigger and develop more if you let him

lie around and forget that he has any chores to do. Let him "think."

The greatest trouble in the world is that too many people try to run us. They won't let us alone. Boys ought to be encouraged to think so many hours a day. There should be lessons in observation in every school. Boys should be made to tell the teachers what they have observed, every day. Lessons out of books are not much good. It is what a boy has seen and knows by personal observation. It was this that made Audubon the great naturalist. It was this that made Lincoln a great statesman. A great many people said that Thoreau was the laziest man in Massachusetts. He did act that way. He was too lazy, almost, to keep food in the cupboard sufficient for the next meal. But he was all the while making himself the classic-author of American literature—the poet-naturalist of the world.

Don't give up the habit of boyhood. Take a little time every day to stop and think. Consider the heavens, how manifold; consider the fields and forests; consider man in the image of God; consider thyself. If you spend all of your time doing chores, what are you? But if you spend a portion of your time considering your destiny and your opportunities, what may not you become?

ON "CLASSIFYING MEN"



PHIL LOWELL of Lewiston has been a merchant and a commercial traveler all of his life—and a good one. He fell ill a year or so ago, up in a small town in New Hampshire. He is now about town again, not robust but in God's providence likely to have many more happy days.

When he was stricken, his daughter hastened to his side. When able to speak, the doctor was summoned and Mr. Lowell said: "What is it, doctor, a shock?" "Yes." "I thought so," said Mr. Lowell. Calling his daughter, he said: "Pack my samples; send them back to the House (meaning the business house), tell them that I am very ill and shall never take the road again."

It was done as directed and one morning word was brought to the invalid's bedside that the head of the New York house—a great merchant from a great city—was down stairs and would like to see him.

"I wanted to see you," said the Head of the House, "to tell you to be of good cheer. I came because I wanted to come, hoping to do you good."

"But, sir," was the reply, "I am all thru. I shall work no more. I have resigned. You best fill my place. My connection with the House is over. I am sorry; but it is the end." To this the Head of the House replied: "We shall wait and see. Be of good cheer. Let us talk of other things."

A little while later, maybe a month, a letter came to the sick man, saying that the house was still hoping for his better health; that it had not filled his place and had no present intention of filling it; no desire to do so. On the contrary, it had retained him and had sent out letters to all of his customers notifying them of the circumstances and asking them to consider themselves


Mr. Lowell's customers. They had sent out samples and requested orders.

Other letters of comfort and encouragement followed this and a few days ago came a letter from the House in which Mr. Lowell was informed that things were going very well in their business relations, mentioning sales made by the House to Mr. L.'s customers; discussing matters intimately and enclosing a check for some hundreds of dollars as commissions on sales made by the House to the trade formerly handled by the invalid.

I am relating this story not simply because it is a story of kindness and thoughtfulness—not because it is the Golden Rule in business. It might be said that if there were more such instances, there would be fewer I. W. W. It might be said that if there were fewer I. W. W. there would be more such instances. It might be said that it was the result of faithful service by the Man to the House. It might be said that it is such houses that win the service that calls for such examples.

No! That is not the reason. The real reason is more subtle and more difficult to express. I may be encroaching on forbidden ground in relating it. But I tell it because it was told to me first by a Lewiston man who said, "That was fine, I think. I am proud to tell the story because the firm concerned is run by men of my Faith—Jews. And it goes to show that you cannot classify men by race, religion, traditions, antipathies. Men are men—or not men. And the big thing we are learning in this day of trouble as Nations, is this very thing. All brothers!"

ON "LIVING BY RIVERS"

HEN I was a boy, I lived by a river and I know what an influence big rivers are apt to exert upon boys.

Rivers reach out with abounding imagination, to youth. This river of my youth was one of the four great rivers of Maine and led out to the sea. Many big ships were built upon it and went away down stream into the distance never to return. They disappeared behind the headlands, but we could still hear the voices of the crews chanting "Way Down on Rio! Way Down on the Rio Grande!" and the call of strange places was felt in the blood of all the boys of our town. Many boys that we knew went off in the ships and came back perhaps in a year or two for a little stay in town, swaggering a good deal and telling strange tales of spice-lands, and strange foreign cities—of Lima and Callao, and "Frisco" and South Seas, and adventures in the "Roaring Forties." These tales seemed to belittle the quiet, commonplace lives of us stay-at-home boys and never a boy returned to sea without some other boy went with him. Now and then an old ship, built in our town, came back and tied up at the dock and was ultimately broken up. So the ships that went and the boys that went—some never to return—all had their effect upon us. Our river seemed like the resistless current sweeping us away to the lands of Sindbad. There was never a boy in our town that was content to stay at home. It was almost a disgrace.

The moods and tenses of the river have their effects on youth as does all environment, but with particularly healthful results, I believe, in the case of the river. The river was alive. It touched our emotions and awakened them. We lived in it and upon it. We used

to go down to its wharves in days of storm and lie in the soft shavings of the ship-yards and hear the waves beat up under the piers and dream and sleep, awaking to hear the song of the river, dreamful, mystical, world-calling. On wild and rainy nights of high gales, we would walk along the river street and as solitude was my choice especially, I was deeply moved by the sobbing of the storm and the lashing of the waves, and the pitiless night; and often in the deeper night when all others were abed, I have pressed my face against the rain-washed pane and listened to the roar of the river until day broke. Equally did we love it in calm summer-days. It lay like a mirror, broken only by the leap of the sturgeon whose mighty splashes have awakened me on many a summer Sunday morning. We fished in the river, swam in it, learned to sail boats on it, traded in crude boats in boys' coin—such craft as punts and skiffs, out of which the harvest of drowned boys was appalling.

I count it a special dispensation for a boy to be born on the shores of one of our four great Maine rivers. It is especially fortunate if he be born where ships come and go. It is no wonder that poets have likened the river to the river of life—small beginnings, shoals and rapids in its middle course; quieter broadening out at the close, and finally a gentle assimilation into the mystery of the shoreless seas. The person born and reared where ships come and go, gets something of a new faith. He counts no ship that he saw launched and sail away as ever lost. To him they still sail the seas, with gay flags yet flying—ever going and coming. So, too, with friends, dear friends, loved ones, who have gone on like the ships behind the headlands. The veil is not rent, as yet, but thru it, mistily, we see them as with the ships, waving to us over their sides, with shining faces and beckoning hands.

ON "THE FIRST SKATES"



UTUMN passed, and now winter has come, and have you seen a boy with a steeple-topped squirrel trap or a boy with a top or a pair of skates? These be degenerate days. Neither are there any sling-shot or marbles—hardly any—nowadays.

They have gone, I reckon, and now we find boys passing their afternoons in the picture shows and growing wise on Charlie Chaplins. Skates will be the last to go; but never will they hold the place in childhood's affections that once they held. And there is a reason. They are too common. Anyone can now have a pair of skates as fine and fast and as securely patented to the sole of the shoe as tho they cost ten times as much. Skates have been democratized. Skates have become what the automobile will have become when everyone can have one—quite too full of the human-brotherhood idea to be acceptable to the truly exclusive. So youth goes to the picture show and scorns skates. Nothing for the modern lad short of a chummy-roadster.

There was a time, however, not more than forty years ago, when to achieve a pair of first-class skates was equal to extorting a Ford out of father. The gray-haired reader has a memory, we warrant, of a pair of skates that once filled his eye and he sees a picture of a small boy with his cold nose pressed against a shop-window in some country town drinking in the beauties of a pair that stamped themselves into his youthful brain as with a brand of iron, plucked but recently from the burning. And his dreams, out there in the cold! All of a lad, strangely like himself but somehow stronger and stouter grown, swinging along over the

smooth ice of pond or river, the steel singing at his heels the song of Mercury, on the four winds.

What do boys do, now, anyway! Do they build snow-forts as once they did? Do they spend long days and nights on open-ice, skating away, flushed, strong and happy? Do they work for the wage that buys their guns and ammunition? Do they go without a single thing, just by way of learning humility and sacrifice? Do you remember the first pair of skates you ever owned? Was it not the product of a rummage-sale in which neighboring junk-piles and old-home sinkspouts went up the flue? Were they not of antique build and commonly known thruout the neighborhood? Were they "rockers?" Did they have a toe that curled up over the foot and were the tops ornamented with a brass acorn? Did they go on with a screw into a gimlet hole, in the heel of the boot; and did they ever stay on! and was the hole ever just right; and could you dig out the snow and ice when you got to the pond; and did the straps ever hold and did you know that you had any feet, after the first ten minutes?

Oh well! Why repine! You had your fun. There were warm, red-mittened hands snugly tucked in yours; and flowing curls of brown or chestnut to tickle your nose; and red cheeks to look at and a beating heart to feel throbbing against yours as you swung with your first pair of skates over the ice. They do not have any such ice nowadays, perhaps. Your skates were as good as anyone's. The first pair of club-skates that you ever saw were reputed to have cost six dollars, and no boy ever had six dollars. If he had happened to have that much, he would have bought a candy-store. Thirty cents was a going price for a skatable article. But you could do the Dutch-roll; cut curlicues; do the figure eight and grind-bark. And sometimes you could do them backward, when your girl was not looking on. Club-skates marked the doom

of the boyhood skating. When they came down to 99 cents a pair, there was no struggle in them. The modern boy will now go out and buy a pair along with his cigarette money and then have his shoes tapped and shined. Dad is easy.

But still we are glad we lived when it was worth while to go skating. Uncle Aleck is glad, too. He was a famous skater. He says he learned in the days when boys went barefoot winters and that he had such hard-calloused heels, that he used to bore a hole in his bare heel and screw the skate-screw into it. Uncle Aleck could skate as well as the girls now skate, at Winter-garden. He was a homely man on foot but a god on ice. I am sorry that skating is no longer popular. It tended to democracy of the republican nature. The rich as well as the poor were likely to fall or skate into a hole. And that was something.

ON "THE SCIENTIFIC USE OF WHISKERS"



SCIENCE, especially that which is given in the woman's department of the modern newspaper, is making rapid strides.

We notice, for instance, an article in such a column, this week, on the scientific value of whiskers, which is not so interesting to the woman's department as it is elsewhere, because every woman knows the scientific value of whiskers better than man knows it.

The Scientist in question, after talking about the disappearance of whiskers as pure adornment, once popular, but now gone with black-walnut furniture and hanging lamps, says that the whisker was originally intended as a feeler—a sort of telephone against run-

ning into obstacles. For instance, a man with a fine set of bushy whiskers could go anywhere in the night and by protruding his head with his whiskers, the slightest obstacle would touch the end of the feelers and he would be apprised thereof.

This is really wonderful! How strange are the ways of the Lord. Picture our early ancestors, going around dark nights, on hands and knees, with their whiskers floating out, starboard and port, confident that where their whiskers could go, they could go also. The cat is the present illustration of the case of early parents. The cat has never outgrown the necessity for her whiskers. The whiskers of the cat are exactly as long as the cat's head, and the cat's head is exactly as wide as the cat's body. Wonderful! The whiskers protrude and wire back to the gland in the cat's nose. Any touch on the end of the whisker reaches the brain of the cat. So here we have a portable wireless on the end of a cat's nose.

Take other adornments of animal nature. There is a cow's tail. It is commonly and crudely supposed that it was built onto the end of a cow for the purpose of brushing away flies. But it is not the original use nor the greater use. If you have ever sat under the starboard (or is it port?) side of a cow and been industriously extorting milk with all of the lush freedom with which a democratic congress gathers in the income tax from the non-cotton growing states, and had the cow swipe you in the eye with the more or less unsanitary end of the affair, you could believe anything. The cow's tail was originally a pump handle for milking the cow. There is no doubt of that. It is exactly as long as a cow's tail; it is exactly as wide as a cow's tail; and it is placed at the south, or milk-producing, end of the cow. It is simply atrophied as a pump-handle, by non use. I can fancy that olden day, when your great, great, great, etc., parent used to go creeping thru the bushes

at night guided by a large set of bushy red whiskers that served as warmth, light and rudder, creeping up to a real cow, with a real tail, seizing her and pumping the milk. Those must have been good old days. No wonder the milkman sticks to the pump-handle even to the present. I suppose it is a sort of survival of the milkman's past, an avatar of that early day when the scenes aforesaid occurred that even now send the milkman out to the pump to yank her to and fro, purely from habit.

Yes, science is making rapid strides. No longer man grows a beard that he may feel his way around. No longer the boy milks by the familiar methods which need no comment. We use electricity instead. But the day will never come again when milking is what it used to be. What sport it was to go out in the barn early in the morning and meet the cows. How the milk sang in the frosty pails. How the warm breath of the cows arose upon the air. Science has never improved upon nature. And science as found in daily newspapers with its convictions on the cat's whiskers and the whiskers of Adam and Noah and our early fathers, does much substantial good in calling to mind those attitudes of primogeniture and making us wise to danger. For if we persist in riding, we shall lose the use of legs. If we persist in turning up our noses at other people, we shall lose our sense of smell. Undoubtedly we could once flop our ears like the mule. What a loss today. Fancy the delicate tone shadings it gives to the lower animals. Picture an audience at the Symphony, suddenly throwing its ears forward with a swoop, at the pianissimo; erect, at the piano; longitudinal, at the forte; to the rear, at the fortissimo. And then the grand ensemble of the orchestra with every ear wagging back and forth, up and down and round the circle according to the sensitive perceptiveness of the ear. A glorious picture indeed.

So as a moral: Don't give over the regular and conservative use of the rudimentary organs. Don't get so lazy that you can't talk or walk or smell or taste or feel or think. Above all, don't forget to think.

ON "THE LIGHT IN THE EAST"



HE woman lay, waiting the dawn of day. It was in a handsome room in a great house on a high hill, eleven miles from the nearest city whose factory whistles she could often hear and whose bells came sweet to her ears sometimes of a still morning.

This day was to be the greatest day in all the world, save one or two, which Christians especially observe.

The woman had, as usual, passed a dreamful night—another of those long nightmares of haunted memories. A long stretch of blasted moor dug deep with craters, in which stagnant water had gathered, covered with green scum and floating, nameless things! A long road stretching away into infinity, bordered on either side by trees whose tops had been torn away and whose trunks were blackened and twisted! Sometimes strange shapes flitted across them; moving armies, flights of masked men; huge engines crawling like caterpillars and crushing human forms as they passed; rat-filled trenches vomiting flame; barbed wire and death! Every night, by the edge of one of these holes, lay a figure that filled her soul with horror and made her heart almost stand still; a figure that evoked memories of a childhood form and of clinging baby arms. The face eluded her. She had never seen beneath the visor of the iron helmet. Sometimes she had not dared

to look; at other times she must look but could not. All this for eleven months!

The light in the East reddened a trifle and came in at the window and settled on the floor. And then something new and effulgent slowly rose along with it from the floor, slowly creeping along the wall. It seemed a faint, aurora-like gleam as from beyond the hills—even from eternal fires beyond the imperial sun itself. It spread like a halo as if seeking some object on which to fasten itself. The woman stretched her arms aloft, her draperies falling from her, her hands clasped as in prayer. And the light slowly moved and moved and gathered itself and shone with faint flushings as tho a lambent flame from some moving taper searching in the night.

And lo! From out the dimness of the room, there shone the face of a child—the sweetest face ever pictured—the Christ-child in the Madonna's arms. On this pictured face the light settled and then the picture seemed to step forth, as tho borne with the swift, soft step of a mother carrying her babe thru danger into safety. It filled the room! It seemed to glow and scintillate and to enrich the dawn. It seemed to the woman to be both omen and joy. It seemed to her to be word out of the infinite that, after all, motherhood was to be enthroned in the world and the Babe was to be the symbol of a day when the world was to be without hatred and bitterness, under the inspiration of the new-born Christ.

Such a dawn! The East was filled with a glory that seemed to presage strange and unusual things; but it was nothing to the glory that filled the room. The woman's heart almost stopped beating. She lifted herself to her knees and knelt in adoration before the Madonna and the child. "It must be a sign," cried she, and her voice rang strangely thru the silence. A sound as of music filled her ears. And the light shone

steadily on the vision of the pictured Madonna--never before materialized in this woman's life--tho one of faith.

And then, faint and clear over the hills, came the sound of distant bells and the roar of triumphant whistles! The still air of daybreak carried the story of unusual things. She would not believe what her heart told her was true. She watched the vision in the little room instead and prayed and prayed! And still the bells rang over the hilltops and the whistles of the distant town kept up their sounding. And the light slowly spread within the room and caught the golden frame of the picture and picked up the familiar settings of the chamber and its surroundings and swept out to meet the full day by the western windows looking out on high hills and deep valleys of the November landscape.

And then the faint tinkling of the telephone bell sounded at her bedside and there was a low voice over the wire and the single word was "Peace!"

And the woman fell back upon her pillow and it was wet with tears of joy. For her boy yet lived and would come back to her!

ON "AFTER DINNER SPEAKERS"



IF I WERE going to give advice to a young man, I should say, "Never become addicted to the baleful habit of after-dinner speaking." I have seen men who, in some rare moment, got away with a really good after-dinner speech. Men came to them and said, "It was a gem." They flushed with pleasure. I have seen them later in life--no longer the light, rollicking, care-free young men, with light blue eye and curling locks, but hunted-

looking, pale, anæmic, bilious, furtive. And as I have seen them later, also, up there at the head table, full of pepsin-tablets and with no taste for the viands, I have said to myself, "Better a happy, care-free opium-eater than given over, body and soul, to the snares of this fearful habit of after-dinner oratory."

I have often fancied the fate of the inveterate after-dinner speaker. A sword of Damocles hangs over his head all of the time, with accent on the Dam. He never knows when his telephone bell will ring and someone will call him up and say "We have booked you for a little speech after our dinner for the collection of peach-stones." Or "We want you to talk to our Neighborhood Club at its dinner to the ladies. You may choose your own subject." He gulps a half-refusal, for he has other business; but the habit is fixed. The awful thirst is in his blood. He yields and again staggers to the orgie. His wife and children see him less and less. He wanders about the streets muttering. He seizes on futile stories and jokes that may be useful. He sinks lower and lower into the gutter of the banquet table and finally finds a grave in the little yard outside the nut-factory—"Sacred to the memory of John Doe. He was a confirmed after-dinner speaker."

The idea that all an after-dinner speaker needs is a dress-suit and an engaging smile is where the trouble comes. Some people—those who get up banquets—seem to think that after-dinner oratory is pure spontaneity and requires no effort but that of joyous speech. Perhaps it is the fault of the after-dinner speaker that this false notion obtains. He gets himself up to deceive. He stands on one foot and curves the other gracefully around the chair leg and tries to pass himself off as thinking on one foot. He stumbles along, emitting witticisms that seem to be drawn from the occasion. Somehow society seems to esteem the speech that is made without any forethought whatever,

at a higher value than the speech to which an earnest man had given time and deep consideration. So the after-dinner speaker wastes most of his time trying to jolly the listeners into the notion that it is spontaneous. If they only knew! Joe Choate was a great after-dinner speaker. But he used to spend about all of his spare time writing after-dinner extemporaneous speeches.

A man died in Detroit the other day who had the reputation of being the readiest and wittiest after-dinner speaker in the middle west. His fame was all over the land. He died, early (all after-dinner speakers are quickly taken off), and among his effects was a card-index of after-dinner speeches for all occasions. He had them for lawyers; for doctors; for dentists; for undertakers; for postmen; for politicians; for automobilists; for rotarians; for women's clubs; for hotelmen—for every possible combination. For instance, he could combine a speech for the undertakers with one for the doctors (see cross references on index-cards) and he could combine an after-dinner speech to lawyers with one addressed to the "lifers" in the penitentiary. That man had system. And it takes system—a cast-iron one—to stand it. To arise before a crowded assembly, all eating ice-cream and battering their plates with their spoons, and talk thru the confusion of waiters breaking the china, while a dryness clutches at your throat and the pit of your stomach is playing "Over There" against your lumbar vertebræ, and perpetrate witticisms and slam around philosophy and belch forth eloquence and run a hundred-yard dash in brilliancy with a lot of other equally misguided invertebrates, is sure to require system and then System.

I want, therefore, to plead with you, my dear readers who sit back in among the gilded throng that attend the sacrifice of these noble martyrs to an American custom. You are in the boxes of the Coliseum at

Rome. They are the early Christians, flung to the lions. You see before you men each one of whom is on his way directly to trouble. Every one of them will land either in the lunatic asylum or in the United States Senate or in Congress or in some other such retreat for the idle rich. A few reform and are saved. Most of them are in the clutch of the maelstrom, hopelessly lost. But whatever their fate—be kind to them. Be kind to them.

ON "WALT WHITMAN AND SOME OTHERS"



THIRTY-five years ago, prowling around in what was formerly the Peucinian Library at Bowdoin College, we fell on half a dozen copies of Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass." It had evidently been in great demand. Whitman published his first edition of the book in 1851, no publisher being willing to take over the contract and Whitman being a printer and a newspaper man with courage to publish it himself. In July of that year, Emerson wrote Whitman the famous letter which the poet published by advice of his friend, Charles A. Dana, and which brought such contumely and criticism on Emerson who hailed Whitman as a genius.

Of course you know what was the great pothor about the book. It had too many red corpuscles in it. As Vance Thompson used to say, there was nothing "caduque" about Whitman; he was all Man. He said things about the great mystery of reproduction that looked not to pruriency but to worlds without end, visions of the earth teeming with races and our duty, in the prospect. It was a very circumspect age. People used the fig-leaf for their emotions instead of

using it as a fan. The book having been read out of meeting, the college boys were evidently stimulated to have copies enough for general circulation.

All that has passed. We now look to purpose alone. A puritanical politician in Washington kicked Whitman out of a government job because the politician happened one day—fourteen years after the first edition appeared—to have just found out that Whitman had written "Leaves of Grass." "Dismissed for having written an immoral book," said he. If it be immoral, so is the Bible. Its thought is as pure as the driven snow. All the difference between Whitman and the weeping-willow literature of that period was that Whitman did not happen to be a punky anæmic. John Burroughs (the sweetest thing in all the world) loved the "good, gray poet" and wrote a book of friendship on him. The poet's life was passed in chastity, charity and in tending the sick in the hospitals of the Civil War.

Whitman was the most glorious looking man who ever lived, save the Man of Calvary. John Burroughs says: "His sweet, aromatic personality seemed to exhale sanity, purity, naturalness . . . producing an exaltation of mind and soul that no man's presence ever did before." He was pure as his life and his person. All the trouble with him was—he recognized that there are Men, Women and a Cosmos. Whitman praised all the virtues and hated the Carnal and the Mean. This distinction some of his imitators have not made. They assume that because Whitman talked plainly about great and pure things, they may talk plainly about small and nasty things. I have in mind a book, published by an author in this city, a man of genius and poetical instinct who has made this mistake. He is thinking about individuals, as tho they were races of men. When Whitman wrote of sexual things, it was in the way of worlds without end and progress to

the ultimate, never about individual passions, or erotic diseases.

Here is Whitman's creed and this is what I am driving at: "Love the earth and the sun and the animals; despise riches; give alms; stand up for the stupid and crazy; devote your income and labor to others; hate tyrants; argue not concerning God; have patience; take off your hat to nothing, known or unknown, or to any number of men; go freely with powerful, uneducated persons and with the young and with the mothers of families; re-examine all you have been told in church or in school or in any book; dismiss anything that insults your own soul; and your very flesh shall be a great poem and have the richest fluency, not only in the silent lines of the lip and face but between the lashes of your eyes and in every joint of your body." "I have no chair, no church, no philosophy," adds he. "I lead no man to a dinner-table, library or exchange, but each man and each woman of you, I lead upon a knoll, my left hand hooking you around the waist, my right hand pointing to the landscapes of continents and the public road. Nor I, nor anyone else, can travel that road for you, you must travel it by yourself. It is not far, it is within reach, perhaps you have been on it since you were born and did not know, perhaps it is everywhere on water and on land."

ON "THE FIRST SNOW STORM"



OST of us have somewhere in the back of our mind, a dream of snug retreat in some farmhouse in the country, high on a hill; with the snow blowing around it; with much music of wailing wind and with big flakes spattering the windows. We seem to hear the kettle singing in the kitchen, and mother humming around the stove with the indefatigable quickstep of the busy housewife.

The little boy who seems to be a very small edition of yourself, presses his face against the clear places in the pane and looks out on a world, all shrouded with a thick veil of enormous flakes that come sailing down criss-cross. He can just see the barn-door and the pump in the barnyard and the big elm in the intervale and the henhouse, where he keeps his pullets, but he cannot see the schoolhouse, a half a mile away, because the snow is coming down so fast. It is funny, the things the first snow does. It builds little pyramids on the wood pile and on the blue knob, on top of the pump. It attaches itself to the nails in the barn-door, in such way that little round knobs stick out all over it, like a fifer's eyeball. It decorates the chimney top and sticks to the north side of the chimney in fantastic way. It sticks to father, out there doing the chores. When he comes in he stomps tremendously with his cowhides and mother gets a broom to brush him. And the little boy goes to the door and pokes out his head and looks up into the sky and sees—nothing but snow-flakes.

I will bet that there is not a person of mature years who has not frequently recurring memories of the first snow of years long since passed away. He hears it ticking away against the windows; he hears it singing

of coming winter in the chimney; he thinks reluctantly, for its very sadness, of the chimney-corner and those that sat about it. It must have been its beauty, that unconsciously impressed itself upon him and made memory as long as life lasts. For there is nothing like beauty to stamp a thing into childhood memory. Beauty and variety! For it also brought a new as well as beautiful world to young eyes. A world of meadows and fields obliterated, a world of running brooks swept away. In place of these came a world of still, white, measureless snow. No wonder it endures in our lives with singular pertinacity.

And the big snow storms! Those old-fashioned snow-falls that just happened before we invented the word "blizzard." Snow storms that were no interruption to traffic, because there was no traffic. Snow storms that over-rode the fence tops, hid the apple trees, buried the hen-coop and the pig-pen; filled the road even with the stone walls on either side. Snow storms so big that even the darned (I use the word reverently) old school teacher couldn't get to school. But you could! And you plowed, neck-deep, through it and found him there and you and he were the only scholars and you did not have a thing to do but live in warm and tenderly affectionate intimacy with him and found new and unexpected phases of his character that made you believe that after all he was human. Snow storms so big that no breaking-out teams passed for days. Snow storms so big that father stayed in the house and mother made mincemeat. Snow storms so big that, when the winds blew, they took the tops off the drifts and again made the roads impassable and there was no school for three days and you stayed in and read "Robinson Crusoe."

I reckon that there will be snow in Heaven. It is too beautiful not to be there. How pretty it will look on the golden streets! Nothing but perfection is to be

found in the snowflakes. They are all perfectly cut jewels of crystal, finer in mathematical accuracy than lapidaries can make. Thoreau says "Snowflakes are the wheels of the storm-chariots, the wreck of chariot-wheels after a battle in the skies. These glorious spangles, the sweeping of Heaven's floor. So there must be snow, up there. And they all sing in the measure of the hexagon, six, six, six."

The first snow teaches also transmutation of earth into heaven. "God takes the water of the sea in His hand," again says Thoreau, "leaving the salt; He disperses it in mist; He re-collects it and again sprinkles it like grain in six-rayed stars of snow over the earth, there to lie till it dissolves its bonds again." Is not that like the Lord's handling of human souls? He takes them in His hand; leaving the earthy. He carries them to the skies. He re-collects them there and again distributes them over the earth, there to live until they again dissolve their bonds, to return again to Heaven and to a new earth.

ON "MAKE YOUR LIFE A LIVING SPRING"



F YOU can keep your mind from running adrift, you do a good work. Every now and then some foolish lad kills himself because he is jilted by a girl—as tho he could not live without her when girls are girls and there are just as sweet ones, perhaps, as she who knows better than he that two cannot be happy together where two do not love.

Keep your mind from becoming morbid over certain things you think you desire and without which you think life insupportable. Material things are not

essential. "Do men curse you?" says Marcus Aurelius. "Do they threaten to kill and quarter you? How can this prevent YOU from keeping your mind temperate and just? It is much as tho a man that stands by the side of a pure and lovely spring should fall a-railing at it. The water never ceases bubbling up for all of that. And if you should throw clay and dirt in it, it would disappear and disperse and the fountain would not be polluted. Which way now are you to go to work to keep your springs always running that they may never stagnate into a pool? I will tell you; you must always preserve in you the virtues of freedom, sincerity, sobriety and good nature."

What I want to bring to the surface in that wonderful sentiment of the Pagan philosopher who was wiser than almost any other man who has lived, is this: do not let the fountain of your life become a pool.

That is what happens when the young man takes his life for such silly reasons. That is what happens when a man becomes half-crazy in his rage against another. That is what happens when a man goes around fancying suspicion against his best friends. That is what happens when a man becomes insanely jealous. That is what happens when a man becomes discouraged, to the point of quitting all effort. That is what happens when a man ceases to be happy at life. The pool is an evil thing in the woods—for instance. It is covered with scum and peopled by monsters and rife with disease. Try, by the virtues indicated by Marcus Aurelius, to have your life a fountain, bubbling away clear and sweet, rippling and sparkling; full of sweetness and life-sustaining qualities. It sweetens not only the surrounding pathways but all of the lands thru which its waters flow. It runs away merrily and men and women bless its outflow. In all times we have idealized the spring. I like the French word "Source" as a synonym of spring.

Chaucer never called it anything but the "Source."

And is it not so? Life—your life should be like the spring—not like the pool. Something giving out—not standing still and waiting for something to fall into it. It may be that you shall get some rain and some sweetness in such a pool, but for the most part it will be slime, blackness, evil thoughts, dark clouds and snaky things.

Any man or woman can make of life a bubbling fountain—if he will. All lives are capable of it. The old philosopher has given the recipe, freedom, sincerity, sobriety and good nature. Freedom is the biggest word in the four and it comprehends all that makes a man wise and liberal. It contains within its significance, disentanglement from the slavery of selfishness, of greed, of lust, of mean ambitions, of sins and meanesses. Following this, comes the necessity of doing this with sincerity—believing, believing, believing, believing. And the sobriety which suggests conservatism of beauty. And finally good nature—blessed radiance of some lives whose rich flower is in human hearts aching after they have passed away.

If there is any one of you who will determine to make his life a bubbling spring rather than a pool—please stand up now and say so. It is needed—your testimony in these days, especially.

ON "GREETINGS TO SCHOOL CHILDREN"



REETINGS and a word, on the way, to that army of school children of America, marching, after the long summer vacation in the year of 1918, along the old-accustomed paths to school.

You, alone of all armies, retain your full quota. All others are torn either by enlistment or by shot and shell. Your fathers, your brothers, your sisters, your mothers, are "over there." You are proud of them and sometimes in fancy, can see them thru the smoke and dust. You expect them to do their duty. Have you thought that they expect YOU to do yours? How are you going to do it? What sort of duty is yours to do?

Let us think it over. The first thing a soldier learns is discipline. It is sometimes spelled "o-b-e-d-i-e-n-c-e." Disobedience in the army is a shame and a disgrace. In extreme cases it is punished by death; in lesser cases, by hardships almost as bad as death.

The second thing he learns is courtesy. The good soldier carries himself like a gentleman. He is obliged to speak politely to his superiors in rank. By this means he comes to speak politely to his comrades. Courtesies sweeten the soldier's life. They smooth the army work. They lessen the burdens in hospital and camp for our sisters and our mothers who are "over there."

The third big thing the soldier learns is neatness. He can't be a soldier and be anything but clean in attire and equipment. And when he is neat and clean, he thinks better of himself.

Other big things that come to him are pride of the company, the regiment, the soldier's pride of courage,

victory, honor, truth, love of country. He finds his very soul in the army. He finds HIMSELF also—prompt, able, courteous, honest, dutiful.

You—scholars of America—must emulate the soldierly discipline of the Armies of America. You are the greatest and best army that we have left at home. You must be courteous. You must be obedient, you must be clean and neat; you must work faithfully—as never before. This is no common year. Everything is different—school has greater meaning as has everything else in life. You must remember that this war is being fought largely for you. Most of us will be gone before its full benefits can possibly come. YOU will be alive and will enjoy them.

It is a fine army—this that sets out for school under the peaceful elms. How different from that huddled, flame scorched army of boys and girls of Belgium and Northern France wearing gas-masks, fleeing between the screeching shells to some underground refuge where they study, to the thunder of great guns and the roar of explosions. If you have any sense of gratitude to those who are dying for you over there, can you fail to appreciate your opportunities this year, of all years? Can you afford to be thoughtless or inefficient, disobedient or discourteous? Does not the vision of the great war make you more proud of your American birth and lineage? Does not the picture of those other school-children in lands of war, make you better appreciate what you enjoy here? And will you remember now, hour by hour, that what the “boys” are fighting for, is the right for you to walk in peace along these quiet streets to a clean and well-ordered free school in a free land.

And, boys and girls! If you could only know how large a part in all teaching depends on YOU. I know that you would be as good soldiers here as those older boys and girls are, wherever they may be. You would

begin with obedience; in all things, courteous; glorying in the spirit of the army of Freedom and Truth; honest to your school and yourself; proud of its victories; appreciative of the service that those who are dying to make men free, are giving you in pain and sacrifice as you walk your way to and from your schools.

ON "THE OLD-TIME BOY-SHOP"



PROBABLY there was a little old-fashioned boy-shop in your old-home town, that you still recall with certain recollections of fondness.

Brack Andros kept the one that I recall, in a Maine village where I was born. He was a very tall, saturnine man with a tremendously black beard, unquestionably dyed. He had a most forbidding manner and a reputed kindly heart. His store was up a flight of wooden stairs, very long and narrow, not at all made for lounging. His door, when opened, rang a bell that tinkled on silence and, in summer, seemed to rouse the blue-bottled flies that kept house in the one window of the shop.

Brack (his full name was Brackett) was a store-keeper, a photographer and a cobbler. He wore a black glazed-cap that made him altogether more funereal and Mephistophelian than otherwise. He never smiled. He never sang or whistled; but he had the faculty of having boys around him all of the time, sitting around his shoemaker's bench or watching him when he disappeared into the mysteries of his photographic room, into which no boy ever entered.

Brack kept peg-tops, needles, spools, paper-soldiers, cassia-buds, sticks of striped candies, enduring and saccharine gooseberries, elastic for sling-shots, slates, multiplication tables, paint-boxes, knuckle-bones, jack-

stones, and certain confections whose names you would not know in these days if you were told. He never gave you a welcome or called you "sonny," or anything but "young man," in a deep bass. After he came to know you, he addressed you by your surname. For instance, if your name were Johnnie Bibber, he always called you "Bibber" and you called him "Mister Andros" as long as you lived. If you called him "Brack" just out of deviltry, you knew it meant a dose of "strap-oil" delivered with the shoe-maker's strap, that went over his knee. Most boys like a hiding for fun. Brack delivered it.

"Shut the door, young man," said Brack when you entered and then, "Report, blast ye, report," and you must face Mr. Andros and salute, saying "Good mornin', Mister Andros! All right in limb, wind and whizzle." If you failed, "Whizz!" went the whistling strap. This shows that Mr. Andros knew boys and how to keep their trade. When he was very playful, he would go into the dark-room and emerge with a finger well daubed with nitrate of silver or safe solution with which he would streak your face, later to turn indelibly black and leave you proudly looking like an Indian.

He used to sell cassia-buds at five cents a pill-box, full. The pill-box was worn off at one side so that it did not hold so many as it looked. What would you not give for the tang of the cassia-bud in the little bullet-like, heart-shaped pellicles. You could not get it now if you had a ton of them. Brack knew. He knew the season for every game. When he put a set of "glassers" in the window, the mud dried up immediately in the school-house yard. He knew when to put tops in the window. He appointed St. Valentine's day, we firmly believed. His best line was the old-fashioned "comics." Some old maid stores were above comics. They were brutal things. But Brack sold them because boys wanted them. He would stand and sell

comics while a whole family waited for an ambrotype. Some of his pictures will live forever; fair looking men in velvet vests and with mighty beards.

Long ago, Brackett Andros joined his fathers. The little old shop is gone. Most of them are gone everywhere. Boys are no longer interested in one-cent goods. But something surely has gone with it. Brack's steps were worn by children's feet. Men grown to dignity of years never came back to the little town but to open the door; hear the shuffling feet; see the same old black, glazed cap and hear from beneath the spectacles, hiding twinkling eyes, the old, old words, "Report, Blast ye!" and himself to stiffen into erectness and saluting to the eyebrow, ring forth: "Good mornin', Mister Andros; all right, limb, wind and whizzle."

Will he be there, where all shall meet? And shall we hear the same old salutation and be able to answer truthfully as of old?

ON "BREAKING OF DROUTHS"



YOU like a rainy day better than you like two or three rainy days, don't you? But in spite of your weariness at the rainy season of June and July, 1918, you recall certain days and nights when the rain was music to your ears, coolness to your brow and healing to your soul.

Do you remember anything like this? A long spell of blazing sun of midsummer; parched earth, brown and dusty; heat-waves rising over the fields; no water in the pastures for the stock. Then came a day when the poplar-leaves turned up white in the trees near the

garden fence and seemed to be shivering all over; and the winds sort of moaned, eerie-like, around the corners of the house; and the hens preened their feathers. And the next day the mists seemed to come up over the fields and the men sat in the barn-door and looked at the weather vane and wondered if it would be wise to get any more hay down, and then all of a sudden you heard a sound like the tinkling of silver coin on the roof and then a whispered lullaby as of myriad voices singing a world to sleep; and then the steady fall of the rain. And don't you remember the men, sitting in the doorway, with the rain slanting down across it, and up in a cosy bed in the hay, a small boy listening to the rain on the roof and dreaming big dreams? The drouth had broken.

Have you ever come into camp or tavern at night after a hard day in the rain or snow and after warm supper and change of clothes and a pipe, crawled into bed to hear the waves on the beach, or the sleet on the roof, or the tree swishing against the logs outside and withal, the firelight in the open fire-place leaping to the storm?


Did you ever see the breaking of the storm; the lessening of the down-fall; the rolling back of the hordes of the sky; the lightening of the gloom; the silencing of the heavy artillery of the tempest; the coming of the blue beneath the flying scud; and at last, the sun; ultimately, the stars in all their glory?

You have. Would you exchange it for never-ending sunshine, a succession of days with never a cloud? Would you prefer a world without any turmoil, without storm or snow or sleet or rain? Do you suppose that it ever rains when it is not needed for the general plan of life, to water and enrich the earth, to bring the dust-germs to the soil, to reduce nitrogens and gases of other kinds, to give a bath to nature where she needs it?

So do not fret when it rains on your new straw hat. Don't grumble if it rains a week to the defeat of your vacation. Think of the brooks that now begin to run to the sea; of the meadows, lush with upstanding grasses; of how even in the city streets, when the rain swept down the canyons of the tall buildings and the gutters gurgled, they were carrying away the corruption of a world. And if you can find no other analogy, find it in the washing away of evil things in the storm, even in the storm of the World on the Western Front. Maybe after all, the world is destined to profit also by storms of war and that they are essential to advancement. Surely this war is bound to do some good, with all its evil, all its suffering. Do we not hope and believe that it will refresh our ideals and cause them to lift their heads like withered grasses when the drouth has broken? Do we not believe that it will spur on growth and bring new things to flower as even does the rain?

And if the wind comes round right and stands in the point of compass called God's justice, the day will be long and full of peace under blue skies and soft and tender airs, piping of peace.

ON "OWNING HALF OF A HORSE"

NCE upon a time I owned half of a horse. It was when I was a young reporter on the newspaper and roomed with a young man with far more knowledge of a horse than I had—and that was not saying much for him, either. Personally, I hardly knew which end of a horse went into a stall first and I could not have harnessed a horse, if I were to have died for not doing it.

This particular horse was a descendant of a rather well-known Maine racer named Gideon which was, if I remember aright, a son or a grandson of the great Hambletonian. She was a gray and high-headed mare and full of action. We called her "Notala," for two reasons—one because we owed for most of her on a note, and second, because she had no tail, or rather, a docked tail. We used to ride some evenings with her and my friend who was very successful in society, used her to take his various girls out riding. I sort of changed the name of my half of the horse to "No-teller." Once or twice a week I used to get permission to take my half of the horse out, and we used to lie awake far into the night discussing which half he owned and which half I owned. We always agreed, however, which half of the note each of us owed. I always owed the half that was coming due first.

Along about the latter part of August we discovered that the mare had speed. A couple of boys can usually find speed in a horse kept at a livery stable, on oats, as was ours. We took on about everything that we met on the road and as September came in, we trimmed some horses on the way to fairs. The mare had speed—no doubt about it and it was up to us to find out how much speed she had, for those were the days when speed in a brood mare was valuable, and our mare was young and well bred. Then, too, State Fair sort of imbued us with notions about speed and hoss-flesh; for we loafed around the horse stalls a bit.

After the Fair was over, we got permission to go up to the track and try out our mare for extreme speed. We got a light wagon and cut out all of the accessories such as extra tires and hitching-weights, and borrowing a split-second stop-watch, went to the track early in the morning before any of the rail-birds could "clock" our mare as she did the turns. My room-mate was to drive and I was to hold the watch on him. He

scored once or twice by way of warming-up as we had seen the jockeys do, and finally we let her go and I held the watch. De-lighted! No name for it! Think of it! Only 2.21 $\frac{1}{4}$! Remarkable. Again we put the mare to it and this time I roared down the dawn, "Mile in 2 min. 19 sec. We have got a world-beater."

We said nothing; but we had a friend who wanted a fast horse. He had plenty of money and had never owned a horse. He knew as much about horses as we did—no more. He was a college professor. We wrote him about the mare and he came on to see her. He liked her. We went up to the track—we three—and tried the mare again. Again she did the trick around 2.20. He wanted her. We sold her at a nice profit, paid our notes and were supremely sad and supremely satisfied.

Time passed. Along about December we were visited by a man who looked like a horse-man. He said that he had been training a gray mare belonging to a certain man—naming our friend—and he understood that he had bought the mare of us.

We said "yes, that was the fact." The man looked us over shrewdly and seemed satisfied. "The mare is bred as you say," said he with a rising inflection. "She certainly is," said we. "And she had speed when you sold her?" "She DID!" shouted we. "You know what she did on the track to a wagon?" "Ye-e-s," said the man. "And the man was there when he bought her and saw her do it," said I. "Two-twenty, easy."

"Funny," said the man, "I have been driving that mare to the snow and there ain't a four-minute horse in Chelsea that can't beat her. I have been giving her my best attention and I can't get her to go at all. I've shod and booted her and she can't go. Somethin' must a' happened to her or else I ain't no driver. You drove her a mile in two-twenty? And the buyer saw it?" "Yes," echoed we. "Where was it?" said the man,

sort of helplessly. "On the Maine State Fair track." "Mile track?" said the man, sort of for lack of anything else to say. "No-o-o," said one of us. "Half mile track; hanged if I know! None of us ever thought." "How many times around did you go?" shouted the man. "Once," said we.

I have always said that two innocent fools, each owning half a hoss, can sell to good advantage if they can get a man for a buyer who is equally innocent. "Boys," said the man as he went away, "it's all right I can sell the mare for a driver; but she ain't no speed hoss and if ever I do want to sell another hoss for speed, I'll send him to you." And that was the end of my end of a horse.

ON "JUSTICE AS A SOLVENT"



WE HEAR a good deal about a middle ground or unity between the warring "classes" of earth. But what are classes? Are men and women to be classified because one man has been frugal, thrifty, careful of his health, and self-educated as against the man who has chosen to do nothing all thru life but follow his passions, his lusts, his idleness, all of the while grumbling at the man who has gone ahead in service and in accumulation? Does a million of the improvident, constitute a class against a million of the provident?

Oppression is what we should get after in this world—and we should get after it by administration of every agency that will obliterate it. It is a sly fox and should be chased to its hole and there drowned out. Special privileges are the mice that burrow into the comfort of a million homes. Wrongful segregation of the common utilities of life should be hunted down and made to stop.

When the public speaker, therefore, talks about a middle-ground of meeting in the warfare of nations and classes within nations, he talks about "Justice." The Bolshevik scorns justice, saying that it is merely a specious interpretation of power, made by the man who got the jump on the other and said that this is just and that unjust, when as a matter of fact there is no moral law involved. But justice is, nevertheless, the solvent and the ideal of human comfort and right. Generally, all human needs are spelled in three languages—physical, mental, spiritual. Justice is the largest measure of human liberty consistent with the rights of others. Those rights are not altogether in food, clothing and luxuries. They are to be found also in human-love, protection of children, sanctity of home, right to live on the face of the earth, satisfaction of the yearnings of spirit, conscience, religion, soul.

It is absurd, therefore, to go on fighting for purely material things. We cannot spell progress in dollars altogether—nor even in shorter hours of labor. A world in which every man was earning a hundred dollars a week and working an hour a day, would starve to death. The earth would laugh at him and say, "Starve." The edict of Eden was "by the sweat of thy brow shalt thou earn thy daily bread," or words to that effect. If the materialist, who represented in the beginning a common ownership of land and a common right to land, had put his labor into a field of corn, he would not care to share that labor and its productiveness with a man who sat along the edge of the furrow, with his arms about the neck of a nymph and a bottle of wine in his stomach. He would demand segregation of that corn-field against such non-producer, and thus would be set up again the "class." He would say, "This is my field."

Democracy is not a Utopia of idleness. There is no greater mistake than that comfort can come by less of

honest work. There is no truth in the notion that "labor" is with the hands alone. Happiness is not alone in creature comforts. Pleasure exacts the same toll out of life as does toil—only more swift and depleting. Its opposite is pain. The opposite of work is peace and sound sleep. Those who talk as tho this world were all of it and that what we can get here by theft, by anarchy, by the red flag, is all to the good, are making the terrible mistake of forgetting that we have three natures—physical, intellectual and spiritual, and that we all go hence to some reckoning. If this were true—that all we get here by theft, anarchy and revolution, is all to the good and that the end is oblivion—the world is a monstrous mistake. This is the doctrine that sent Germany to the trenches and made of the world a shambles. This is the doctrine that our boys have been fighting. Are they coming back to find that this doctrine is flourishing here at home, when they thought that they had killed it in the trenches?

Every time you hear this Godlessness preached (and it is being preached); every time you hear any man saying that this is the time to get all you can regardless of the other fellow, you better deny it. This IS the time to get what is consistent with justice, and there never has been a time when it was not right to do so. Justice thinks of no class, but all classes. It encourages no enslavement of any man. It works for equality up to capacity. It thereby encourages every man to be prudent, persevering, studious and diligent. If, under some dispensation, every man were equal to his neighbor, the mind would cease to aspire and the soul to expand. Justice just simply gives you a chance. You can't be idle, lazy, cruel, gross and vindictive and be "equal" to the man who has cultivated the pastures of his mind and soul, any more than the barren field is equal to that which ripples in the golden wheat.

ON "A STORY 'HOW HOSEA CAME' "



T WAS a dark and stormy night, on Moosehead Lake. The crowd of sports were sitting in Elgin Greenleaf's camp at Sugar Island. It had started in to snow along about three o'clock and Elgin had sent the steamer down to collect the boats and tow them in. The snow came so thickly that they could not see the island and had to steer by course and compass.

After supper, with the decks cleared and the boys sitting by the leaping open fire, Elgin himself came in and sat in the old rocker, talking in his high, eerie voice, tuned to the storm, as it whistled around the corner.

"Elgin," said one of the fishermen, "it must be awful lonely here sometimes, especially in fall and winter."

Elgin hunched his chair a little nearer the ruddy blaze; took a look up at the little over-head scaffold far up in the eaves of the camp, on which were stored the tin-pails of matches, nails, screw-drivers and other impedimenta of a hunting camp, and began to tell this story to Amos Fitz, Fred Gross, Ad Pulsifer, Henry Hanson and other boys gathered around him.

"You remember my friend Hosea that used to come up here," said Elgin. "He was a spiritualist. He always said to me, 'Elgin, you bear in mind there is something in this here spiritualist business and I'm going to prove it to you!' He used to tell me that if he died before I did, he would surely come back and give me some sort of a demonstration of what a husky spirit really is. 'And,' said he, 'I won't make no ordinary sort of a demonstration. I will make one hell of a noise, so that there won't be no doubt about it. You'll know it when I come.'"

"Well, Hosea died over in Bangor, in the summer, and I staid up here till late fall. Everyone had gone and I was expectin' the carpenter to come over from Kineo station to help me close up the houses and camps. It came up to snow and blow a gale, just about as it is tonight and he didn't come, so I was all alone on this big island. And, boys, it blew somethin' awful. The wind howled around this old camp, woofed down the chimbley, roared around the corners and shook this camp something terrific. The fire seemed to act funny; kept leapin' up and growin' pale, and the branches growled against the roof and the winds seemed to be rattlin' the door and fingerin' the latch, and howlin' like demons, and the waves splashed on the beach and a lot of other sounds mixed in. And I, all alone, I naterally fell to thinkin' of Hosea."

Elgin paused to let his words sink in and that his listeners in the camp-fire's light might compare the description of that night with the wild and ghostly sounds going on outside.

"I was a rockin' right here and thinkin' of Hosea. Sez I to myself, 'Ef Hosea was to come, wouldn't he average to come in on this wind and to the old place where we used to sit and on such a night as this? Hosea was a powerful set man! He never said he would do a thing and failed to make good. He was a good man and true, and I'm rather feared he'll come tonight.'

"So I couldn't keep Hosea out of my mind! I was a settin' right here," continued Elgin. "I was rockin' right in this chair. I was thinkin' of the way Hosea said he would come, with a hell of a noise, when, boys, just as sure as I am alive, there came right behind me, floatin' like a streak of white lightnin' out of the ceilin', a somethin' that struck the floor within two feet of the after right hand rocker of this old chair with a bang that—s-a-a-a-y, well—you never heard no such dam

racket in all your born days, rip-roaring, tin pans and clatterin' and hellishness personified breakin' all records.

"Well, sir, that noise sent a thrill thru me to the marrer! It lifted me out of this chair, and turnin' around, I leaped to my feet and yelled at the top of my voice, 'My God, Hosea, HAVE you come? Have you COME?' "

The wind whistled a stave or two of the grave-digger's lament, over the chimney. Silence sat on the crowd as with funeral robes. Elgin rocked gloomily, saying nothing.

"W-w-w-e-l-l," stammered Fred Gross of Auburn, "was it Hosea?"

"No," said Elgin reflectively as he thought a moment. "It was a tin pail full of nails and matches that had been a-settin' on the edge of the scaffoldin' right up there overhead, and it had come loose by my rockin' and the wind, and had struck bottom up jest behind my back! I ain't never heard nothin' from Hosea since."

ON "PRESERVATION OF THE HOME"



AMONG other commissions, we should have one on families that run to more than one child.

Modern motherhood has taken on vastly complex phases. In olden days, mother appeared on the scene (out of brief and periodic absences) with a new babe in arms and let the forerunners run. In those days the germ was not in existence; Pasteur had not pessimized us; dirt was supposed to be healthful and a child was not "doing well" until it had run thru the gamut of children's diseases, usually without other medical attendance than the household "granny" could afford. As for diet! Well, it was table-food and enough of it.

Nowadays, mother is a little wiser than Solomon about babies and knows more than Dioscorides about medicine. If she has two small babies she is a slave. If she has three, she is a "slavey." If she has four, she is a martyr, and if she has five, she is a nervous prostrate, surrounded by winged microbes, influenzas, croups, malnutritions, adenoids, tonsils, circumcisions, dentitions, infections, septics, antiseptics, ptomaines, proteids and heat-units. Her mother probably never heard of any of them and the Lord protected her and her brood. The Lord has now abandoned all mothers and they have nobody left to protect them, poor things, except the doctors and Uncle Sam.

Children are tyrants, if permitted to be. They are unreasoning animals—content with what they have, unless they have too much. Mother's mother had nothing to give her children but bread and molasses and a not over-clean kitchen floor, on which to roll to their dirty little content. Grandmother's baby finger was besmeared with molasses and a tiny goosefeather stuck to it and grandmother whiled away her oblivious infant day, trying to pick off the feather, which became increasingly difficult as the molasses spread on her digits. An old-fashioned baby could be tied in a bushel basket and set on the back door-step, for the afternoon, with certainty of never a "yip" out of her. Now she needs to have her adenoids inspected hourly; her nutrition weighed minutely on apothecaries' scales; her eyes examined by the oculist every afternoon, while some of these new babies are said to be even born wearing bifocal lenses on their tiny noses.

So it has become impossible to rear babies, fashionably and scientifically, any longer, without a Federal Commission to supply what the Red Cross has been supplying in this war—first aid to dying, starving, soul-worn motherhood. Few women can live thru the successful battle against unseen foes, for one child,

much less two or more. Many of them foresee the issue and leave large families to those who can't afford to hire child-specialists and therefore can afford to have babies. The answer to this is: think of the children we save by fanning off the germ. The reply to this is: think of the children we lose by knowing so much. The pros say "notice the lessening infant mortality." The cons say "notice the decreasing birth-rate." Give us liberty or give us a Federal Commission to supply nurses for tired mothers.

Do you know anything that is scarcer than hen's teeth? Yes! Baby-tenders! I know a woman who offered this week, \$25 a week, board, laundry, an afternoon out with a ticket to the movies, to a nurse to come to her home and care for four children for three weeks while she went to New York to escape going crazy. She offered it again and again in vain. All seekers for employment turned the job down and the children are all healthy, happy, contented little folk, just active, and yet we hear about organized charities.

So we turn to President Wilson and suggest that as soon as he makes peace abroad, he come here and make peace at home. The soldier in the field has done his bit and it took ten months. The mother, at home, does her bit and it takes a lifetime. And nobody talks of federal aid for her but myself. If infant mortality is to be kept low, and mothers are to keep up the fight against unseen foes, Maternalism must join Paternalism in government and jaunty maiden ladies, who have been driving automobiles or worked for the Red Cross or knitted and purled in public, must rally to the relief of their sisters on the firing line of the cradle. We must have organized central agencies of relief. We must have organized rest-day planning, for half-crazed mothers. We must have settlement of increasing perplexities of house-keeping. We must have organization of cooking and service. We must have intelligent

consideration by the government of how the American home may be saved; for as sure as you are a foot high, it is in danger. We must either have cooks, nurses, housemaids, or we must give up having babies. We must have service or else give up the home and turn the babies over to some germ-proof storehouse for rearing them.

Either one of these I say (all obnoxious or impossible), or a government of the mothers, by the mothers and for the mothers, by Federal commission, lest babies perish from the land.

ON "THE PINE TREE"



HIS tree stands by the sea and on mountains and speaks a language of the sea. Lowell says of it: "But the trees all kept their counsel and never word said they; only there sighed from the pine-tops a music of seas far away." If you lie on the brown floor of a pine wood and look up at them and see the needle points reaching about, each to his neighbor, and see the branches swaying to and fro, you can easily hear the whispering and it is all of ships and the sea and of the wind of the salty odor, that passes along. The pines at Bowdoin College, Brunswick, always seemed to be talking of the ocean whose breezes stirred them.

"The pines have always been a sea-going family since first sails were spread," says Maud Goings, who wrote a beautiful book about trees and who quotes from Reybolles about the pine: "This grand tree, shooting up like a palm towards the clouds, what is its fate? Prone and naked in the hands of the shipwright; rising to the stately mast of a ship; carrying a flag with all the ideas it represents, to the ends of the earth." Thus born by the sea, destined to the sea, why

not talk among its branches of the sea, rippling like silken-gowns or roaring like distant surf on ledges.

The pine tree has a peculiar function among trees, also. It lives all along the Atlantic coast from far north to far south and forms a windbreak and barrier for the more tender, broad-leaved trees that live further inland. And yet more strange, they live also along the Great Lakes and brave the gales there, for the same valiant purpose. For the gales that sweep the Maine coast thru the pine and spruce, hemlock and fir, would tear to tatters the broad-leaved oak or maple or elm. The evergreens are brave, staunch trees, bearing burdens of snow on their sturdy branches. The winds slip thru them; they fling their arms skilfully, like a boxer in the ring, and they love the cold and the storm. They are fit emblems for this State of Maine, that also stands firm, with its jutting headlands against the piling thunderbolts of the winter storm.

Another thing about the Pine-tree and some of its brother conifers, is this: it endures easily and proudly where life is hardest. It is an out-door, two-fisted tree. It does not matter much to the pine whether it is in the arid sand or on the sparse soil of the rock-bound coast or on mountain-tops, it will endure. Sometimes in the sand, it will send down tap-roots thirty feet for moisture. You will find them also on the flinty scarp of Mount Kineo, clinging to rocks with roots piercing fissures hardly big enough for the blade of a pen-knife to enter; yet exposed to gales that would rip the life out of a maple. And here the pine stands, and sings and sings. The pine-tree did not choose this kind of life. It was naturally a tree of the lush lands, the river valleys. Here it is so beautiful that one can well-nigh worship it. Once, the conifer covered the earth. They were mighty in the land, when all at once, lo! the broad-leaved trees appeared in immense number and variety. They were like an invading

army—as when the Saxon invaded England, says one author, and the wild British fled to swamp, mountain, desert and barren. So fled the pine by absolute conquest of numbers—but never dismayed, only made the stronger and more self-reliant. Some went to the sands, sending roots deep, so that when burned over the pine reappears from its deep sources. The broad leafed tree can never follow them to their retreats.

The Maine pine once lived in Greece. There, according to mythology, it was a lovely maiden, named Pitys, whom Pan, the player of world-symphonies, on river reeds, the sweet god Pan, loved. He whispered to her on the breezes and Boreas heard it—wild Boreas of the North wind. He also fell in love with Pitys and declared that no mere piper on small instruments should have the maid; so he threw her from the rocks and the gods caught her just in time to make her into the Pine.

The winds love the Pine and foster it. All its seed-ing is done by the wind; thus it seeds where life is so cold that bird or insect could not live. You have seen the pine-pollen in long yellow streaks on ponds. The pine cone is so wonderful as to deserve a chapter to itself. It will make you sure of God; it could not happen by chance.

Massachusetts put the pine on its coinage. Maine took it for its symbol—the happiest gift from the mother state. Our forefathers did not choose it for its beauty, because along by the sea it is gnarled and twisted. They chose it because it is an out-post tree, protecting the weak; because it is rugged and strong; because it is clean; because it is ever-green and never-dead. They chose it because they saw in it an augury of the people of this State. They chose it because they hoped we might be as undaunted as the Pine.

ON "TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF INANIMATE THINGS"



ANY years ago, Edward Everett Hale wrote a story about a hoop-skirt and how it deliberately and with malice aforethought, defeated the Southern Confederacy. An old-fashioned hoop-skirt, out-of-place, was a pure and highly accomplished type of depravity. Mr. Hale went farther than this and spoke of "the TOTAL depravity of inanimate things." One could not satisfy any of the inclinations of a discarded hoop-skirt. There was no way of pleasing it. It was totally depraved. If you had lived in the days when they were fashionable, which came along about the time of the civil war and a few years later, and had been compelled as a boy to take a hoop-skirt and dispose of it, you would understand. The hoop-skirt was a series of steel wires, flattened and thin, highly elastic, laid parallel and concentric, held together by tapes and worn about the female form for purpose of sinuous rotundity and other things. I have nothing to say about what they would do when worn. Far be it from me. But I do know something about them after they were supposed to be dead and discarded.

For instance, an old hoop-skirt could not be put into an ash-barrel. If you attempted it, the hoop-skirt would immediately stick its head up over the top of the barrel like the sea-serpent from the deeps and would grasp you in its embrace. You could not burn a hoop-skirt in a bonfire, for if you tried to do so, the hoop-skirt would disentangle itself and, released from its tape, would go cavorting all over the yard and up the street and snaking it all over the neighborhood, and the neighbors would say, "There comes one of the X's old

hoop-skirts." You could not bury one of them. Oh, no. I have seen hoop-skirts that had been buried a week, rise from their graves and come leaping into the house. The dynamic power of a bundled up hoop-skirt was equal to that of a modern depth-bomb. You could not hang them up in a closet out of the way, for if you ever entered a closet, the hoop-skirt was ready and waiting for you. It would grasp you around the neck and you would get your head between the wires and you were liable to be choked to death or guillotined. You could not put one of them in a trunk. Oh no, once more! When you opened that trunk the hoop-skirt would leap to the ceiling and come down enveloping you. You couldn't throw them in the river, for the pesky things would catch in the propellers of steam craft and do damage. Junk men would not buy them. Ash men would not take them. The only thing possible was to hang them right side up from the beams in the upper attic and when the attic was full—why sell the house.

There are other things, more modern, that have a certain element of "total depravity of inanimate things." They have a certain deviltry that seems to reside in some element of matter, cognate with intellectuality. Indeed, some of these things seem to think exclusively, in terms of mischief. I think I have spoken of union-suits. I have actually proven that a union-suit of respectable ancestry and make, will actually turn wrong side out in the night. I have laid them absolutely right side up at 10 P.M., signed, sealed et cetera, and woke in the morning to find the left leg where the right ought to be and the seat thereof on the front porch and the right leg twisted around the neck. I have almost caught them squirming into mischief in the night. At present I am driving a nail thru the seat of mine every evening so as to make sure of finding it in equilibrium in the morning. And what is worse

with hoop-skirts, union-suits and so forth, is that they choose the most unfortunate times for their depraved doings. The rascals actually THINK. There is no doubt about it.

Take a shoe-string. Did one of them ever break on a fine, peaceful, leisurely Sunday morning, when you had more time than you knew what to do with? Never. It looks up into your face innocently, assuringly, on all leisurely days; but when you are in a hurry, when the world depends on your catching the 7.10 train, it "busts." And it "busts" in a perfectly sound spot. Take shoes! Did your shoes ever squeak except at a time when you were compelled to walk up the aisle in some highly formal gathering with the eyes of everybody on you—such a place as church—or when suddenly called to the platform as third vice-president of the league to enforce peace. THEY know. Say they: "This is the time to make this poor old simpleton red in the face. Let's do it!" When do suspender buttons fly first away in a perfect rain of buttons? At receptions when you are in the receiving line and when you can't shake hands, hold your wife's bouquet and maintain your equatorial respectability with fewer than four hands.

Don't talk to me—inanimate things think; and they are frequently depraved, and highly inclined to prick the bubble of our self-complacency, reduce swollen heads and take the conceit out of all men and some women. In this way they have educational uses.

ON "THE HALF HOUR BEFORE YOU SLEEP"



OW many of us pass for a little while into another world in the brief half hour before we go to sleep o' nights? Then there are visions a plenty, flowering and fading, weaving in and out into a fabric as weird and impalpable as the far-off curtains of cathedrals that we have never entered.

The mind then plays strange tricks with us and brings out of its recesses all sorts of ghosts that we thought were long since laid. They are, as someone has said, "like old daguerreotypes that shine out with unexpected vividness from their cases," visions of old houses "where dwells a ghost of yesterday, of a girl, now half a century dead, of lovers who kiss a while; then, drowsily, the mists blow round them wan, and they, like ghosts, are gone."

There are certain places in my mind that keep coming up every now and then, and have done so for forty years. They are the most commonplace incidents of boyhood life—a path that led up past a fence, by the side of a stone-pit, up a very narrow shelf of rock, to a hill-top and then a western view that is set with an old oak tree and a frog pond. Whenever I think of this, a train of reminiscence is set up and immediately I think of Prester John. Now why in the world should one think of that mysterious party of olden traditions when this place comes to mind? But never do I think of this on the hill-top; for, having arrived there, I think of the Tower of London and Eliot, Pym and Raleigh and all of the rest of that busy breed of men who were headed mostly toward the final home of England's brains, in those days.

I have never cared to ask other people if they were bothered with the persistent return, night after night

f these strange old places. Each of them leads to a definite train of thought. For instance, if I think of a certain nook where I used to lie of a summer afternoon and listen to the waves under the piers, I bring in another train of thought and especially of old sea rovers. The reason of this is natural enough, but why Prester John and old romances because I start in my mind to crawl dangerously and painfully up that narrow ledge of rock to the old hill-top?

Of course there are times in everyone's dreaming—unconsciously dreaming—when there are visions that seem to come plainly from one's past. With everyone the old imagery appears. I often see myself as a ragged boy walking thru strange places that I have never visited and never shall in this world. What are they? Are they evidences of some other existence, some pre-natal life—or just fancies? Perhaps you have seen, as I have seen, places that seemed to have been visited before; heard things that you seemed to have heard in some previous existence and especially in this mystic half hour when the soul is about to take wings and fly away, does one stand at the portals and peer into the other world?

Certain lines of reading also cause familiar scenes of childhood to intervene between me and the pages. There is a certain lonely old house, that keeps constantly in my mind. I have no association with it; was never inside of it; know nothing about it; can see only its old battered stove pipe, leaning tipsy-like to one side. I have been reading the story of Ghengis Khan and all of the time crawling over the rafters of an old, abandoned stone-crusher where we used to revel as a lot of boys will do in any abandoned property.

"I have killed the moth," says the poet, "flying around my night-light, but who will kill the time-moth that eats holes in my soul and that burrows thru and thru my secretest veils. . . . Who will shatter the

Change-Moth that leaves me in rags—tattered old tapestries that swing in the winds that blow out of Chaos. Night-Moth, Change-Moth, Time-Moth, eater of dreams and of me.” You talk materialism when you cannot understand why your soul plays such pranks with you. You talk materialism when you face to face with the Change that touches all of us as with the death of the moth! Better solve the things that may be, in the half-hour before you go to sleep, than answer so many questions about the things that are!

ON “THE OLD COUNTRY BRASS-BAND”



NEVER played in a brass band, but my uncle did and I always went to hear him. He played a bass horn. His name was Uncle George. When he was not playing in the band—he played seldom—he ran a country store and sold everything from gunpowder to molasses. He could not keep, therefore, a first-class bass-horn lip. And after he had juggled a half-dozen mowing machines and handled a ton or two of bar-iron and steel, his fingers were not very nimble on “Comin’ thru the Rye.”

The band reorganized once a year, in July. Its purpose was to run an excursion on the “fast and safe ocean-going barge ‘Yosemite’ to Boothbay Harbor or Fort Popham, with music by the Bowdoinham Brass Band.” It took about two weeks for the band to get up its personnel and its lip. It met in the Grand Armory hall for rehearsals. There were two things that filled a boy’s heart with glee—when the fire-engine played once a month, and when the band was getting ready for its annual excursion. One was as wet as the other.

The band always played a piece called “The Basso’s Pride.” My Uncle George was the basso and the pride

was all his. It consisted of a solo of three grunts and a dying wail. That is the way it struck me. Whenever the band approached this tour de force of Uncle George, my heart stopped and did no business. Uncle George would lay down his basso; look around to see if the crowd was watching and that all was still; he would pick up his horn, get inside of it; then his eyeballs would begin to stick out and out and out; his back would arch like a tom-cat in a fight; his hair would rise and then with tremendous power would emit "Poom-pah—Poom-pah! Ugh-ugh-ugh! P-o-o-m-pah! Ugh-ugh-woof! Um-pah—" and then "do-re-mi! Oom-pah." And then his eyeballs would recede and his hair fall and he would stop and take down his bass-horn and wipe his brow. The solo was over; the liquid melodies were no more. "The Basso's Pride" was ended. It was, indeed, beautiful.

I liked to see the band assemble on the morning of the excursion. It came from "The Ridge;" "Abbakill-dassett," Carter's Corner and the Landing. They rarely got over eighteen out, with instruments, including a boy with cymbals. The uniform was architecturally abrupt. It was cut before it shrunk. I have seen pants that musically speaking were arpeggio. In other words the legs were arpeggio—not cut simultaneously. They were coloraturo in a large and sympathetic way; red caps; blue coats; green pants and yellow trimmings—a sort of passionate uniform intensifying the atmosphere of the players. When you heard the band play one of its three tunes—the "Girl I Left Behind Me," which they always played as the noble "Yosemite" swung into the restricted Cathance, you felt so darn bad about the girls that you forgot the music.

The E-flat cornet player was red-headed. His red cap and his red hair and his red face and his freckles made me very much concerned for spontaneous com-

bustion. He played con expressione. When he arose to give the preliminary warble for a tune he went thru some gymnastics, believe me. He literally girded his loins for battle. He tested the compression in his cornet by blowing thru the air vent in the side. Then he thumped it up against the railing of the barge "Yosemite" to see if some bad little boy had put a doughnut in the bell. Then he blew in the mouth a little easy to see if the suction was all right and she could get her gas. Then he patted the side of the cornet and "over it softly his warm ear laid" to get the music of the corn-fields and the summer winds. Then he lifted his head eager, alert, majestic, and mæstro-like. And then would swell out "The Basso's Pride" aforesaid.

People came for miles to hear that parting tune. It was the mingled sweetness of barnyard, hayfield, grocery-store and all the financial institutions of the town, viz., the cashier of the bank. Uncle George did his darndest. Superhuman sounds led up to the bass-solo. Chords never heard on land, but reserved for storms at sea swelled over the placid Cathance and the shores took up the echoes. The clarinet wailed and the drums rattled and roared. The altos altoed on their toes and the piccolo squealed like a storm thru the lee braces. And then lo! It was still! As still as tho someone had said "Peace!" and then Uncle George had the floor.

I can see nothing but his eyeballs gradually emerging from his countenance; and hear nothing now, but that glorious "Oom-pah!" Four notes this time and a dying grunt. Nothing ever surpassed it; nothing ever will. Uncle George should have been a bass-soloist and nothing else!

ON "MORE ON THE OLD BRASS BAND"



THE OLD country band still echoes down the corridors of time, especially in my correspondence. Every day or two some one writes me about the old Bowdoinham band, in terms of reminiscence, sweet and suggestive.

Yesterday, a letter came from Wellesley, Mass., about the old Bowdoinham Band and I would enjoy other reminiscences of similar nature about other old country bands, for they seem as music "faint and clear" from other days.

This friend says that after my Uncle George was compelled to give over the solo part of "The Basso's Pride," on account of his business, rather than because of any lack of lip or artistry, he was replaced by a local barber named Evander ("Van") Thomas, who undertook the bass-horn. "Van" not only did the village barbering, but he also sold confectionery, cigars, ice-cream, lemonade and hair-restorer. Van would come direct from a shave or a hair-cut and serve you a lemonade or an ice-cream; so that his delicatessen was not always bald-headed. But as he said, playfully, "We charge nothing extra for hairs in the lemonade." I can remember him well, for he cut my hair once; and I recall that at the time he was studying a piece of music set on the shelf under the looking-glass, meanwhile he snipped off portions of my scalp and ears. But as he said, "I will make it the same price and not charge you anything for the extra close cut." He was a fair and generous barber.

Van's musical capacity was, of course, not within my ken, but my Wellesley friend says "it was marvelous, for Van had no idea of time." If the band started off before he was ready (i.e., before he had spit and gotten his head thru the hole in the horn), he could not

find the place on the music. All he could do was to begin at the beginning and do his best to catch up. Usually he came out about eight "oom-pah's" behind and Van never omitted one of them. He played his whole piece from beginning to end. In other words, he "done his full duty."

Another character was Henry Williams. He had played the fife in the Civil War. He also chewed tobacco and drooled a lot. His notes were, therefore, liquid. It was a wonder how he could chew tobacco, hold his quid and play "Marchin' Through Georgia" at the same time. Henry has long since been gathered to his fathers. Peace to his ashes. He is probably now playing the flute by the side of the River of Life, and a golden flute, too, with, we trust, a complete plumbing and sewer system attached.

William Douglass was the snare drummer of this band. Mr. Douglass has long since passed on, so that it may do no harm to refer to his personal appearance. He was over six feet tall, very spare, as one-sided as a postman and gifted with a very large musical and external ear—in fact, a pair of them. My Wellesley friend says that William's ears had neither "serrations nor corrugations," but had a well-defined cartilage run thru the outer edge like the string thru a pair of pajamas to keep them from falling. There is no greater physical trouble than "falling of the ears." John Bibber, who used to live in Bowdoinham, said that William could lie down in one ear and cover himself up with the other. Now, of course every reader knows that when a band starts out to march, it has method. The leader gives one toot on his horn; waits two or three beats according as the time be three-four or four-four, and then he gives two toots and then the snare drummer (I'd give my scanty hope of heaven to be a boy again and a snare drummer in a band) must roll the drum for one or two half-measures, winding up with two

staccato beats and then "Hoop-la! Away they go! Bases grunting, piccolos squealing, cornets boasting, clarinets singing, drums rum-tumming. Everybody marching away, left foot for'rard!

William was a moderate thinker and mover. His transmission was poor. The preliminary toot usually found William unready and three to five measures behind. So the band would start off, some marching, some playing, some waiting and the leader would toot a reverse action and Mr. Douglass would roll the drum about ten measures to the rear; and Van would lose his place and start off way behind and Henry Williams would lose his warble and yet we all would say "What lovely music." It was lovely. I swear it.

There was once a drum corps in Harpswell that was made up of a one-armed bass-drummer and three hare-lipped fifers. My Wellesley friend says that when they played "Marching Through Georgia," it sounded like an echo from the caves of Aeolus, where they breed wind.

ON "CAPPING THE MAIN TRUCK"



EARS ago the tall square-riggers used to rear their slender masts above my native city of Bath, Maine. The riggers worked on them getting them ready for the sea. Queer, old-fashioned sailormen were these riggers, all of whom had sailed many a time across the Western ocean as well as the other six of the seven seas. I can hear them now, with their deep sea chantries, "Way Down Rio," "Blow a Man Down," "Biscay, O!" and many more, that linger only as faint memories of music, long forgot. One sturdy, tarry man, I can see now, and his voice I yet can hear across the years, rolling above the tide down the river, up the river, head-chanteyman was he!

Boys of Bath used to infest—I use the word after due consideration—used to infest the ships as they lay at the wharves making ready for sailing off to sea, never to return. We swarmed over them, down in the holds, in the dark places along the keelson; between decks where the ship smelled of tarred rope and of the hard-pine; thru the fore-castle and the after-cabins, here and there as we willed, provided we kept out of the way; and often we were given a chance to take a turn on the huge capstan-bars and help a crew warp up a main yard to the music of a chantey.

But there was one thing that no boy who frequented ships could escape, and that was no “duty” either. It was a custom, a tradition, a sentimental journey performed by boys from early days; a test of courage and of high appeal to adventure. And that was “capping the main-truck.” It must not be the truck of the foremast or the mizzenmast, but the truck of the mainmast—the tiny ball that rests on the tip of the mast, thru which the flag-halliards run. Each boy who had the privilege of boys on ship-board as the craft lay rigging at the wharf, must do the stunt or be forever disbarred from the society of the boy of daring and of spunk. “Coward” and worse were the anathemas toward that boy forever after among the boys—and the riggers were not slow in helping on the custom, either.

I have often thought of that duty in years since then—mother’s little boy daring an adventure that might well test many a man of courage and derring-do, hazardous and not to be approved nowadays. Fairly piercing the skies, lifted the taper-like masts, swaying in the winds, rocking to the wave, over the dark, swift-running tide and the cruel deck below, littered with its machinery and pierced by its open hatches. If other boys were like me, it was no place for mother’s little fair-haired boy of fourteen. Many a boy who went the way up the tall masts, did a feat as great as going over

the top—and what is more, he did it purely on his own courage, not in the company of others, giving him support. I can seem to see myself, very tiny in those days, quite as another person, given the test, reaching into the main shrouds and climbing the ratlines to the lubber-hole—a pathetic picture, surely, if he looked as he felt, full of fear and yet ever going on. Some boys took to the lubber-hole—but it was only an evasion, not the fullest victory, so, out he swings over the deck almost horizontal and up over the crest to the first landing place on the main cross-trees. Up here the wind blows about his flapping little knee-breeches. Surely mother would be frightened now. Far above rises the tiny ball of gold, almost in the infinite blue. He well may pray for help; for no boy will call him back or say “that’s enough.” He simply **MUST** go on. He never knows how he did it—parched mouth, beating heart, trembling knees, ringing ears, little hands fairly sinking into each rope with the energy of fear; and at length he stands pressed against the ropes, in panic, at the second station of his journey.

No boy knows how he did it the first time. He only knows that he went on and on and on and finally reached the goal; putting his little cap on the gold ball; waving it over the earth and the river and the tiny figures below, whose cheers came faintly up to the dizzy height. He has a distinct memory of looking over the city; down the river toward the sea and hearing his beating heart, in rapture at accomplishment, and feeling himself say to the little chap whose soul had seemingly been separated from his physical body, “Good Boy! You have done it.” And that boy was I.

What was it good for? I will tell you. It was accomplishment. It was forcing the body to yield to the soul. It was compelling fear to give over to superior force. It was teaching a boy never to say “I can’t;” but rather, “I will.” It was putting him into the class

of those who "do things." It was initiation into the society of the American Boy. Many a time, since then, when I have faced difficulties that seemed unsurmountable as that mast, I have said to myself proudly, "I capped the Main Truck." I can do this thing also!

ON "HAUNTED ROOMS"



HAVE memories of a little old room, in a little old house that I roamed thru as a child, touching here and there sacred things, timidly and as a wayward child, forbidden of the spot, as once, indeed, I was.

The pictures on the wall shine dimly, and I see them not so plainly as I see the oval glass globe with the wax-flowers in it, the full-rigged tiny ship that sat on the old marble-topped table, and I can smell, too, the faint, musty odors of a closed room and the far-off scent of lavender and see the light struggling in thru the blinds that shut out the sun from fading the old ingrain carpet.

This room, so common to old homes in New England, was the parlor, with never a use except its setting aside for great happenings, connected with death, religion, ministers, and visits from personages. Its stiff-legged cane-seat chairs, its hair-cloth sofa, its rocker with the silk tatting pinned to its hair-cloth back, the carved teeth of the walrus or the whale on the mantel, the old-fashioned floral-emblem autograph albums, its holy Bible on the center table—this was a sanctuary that no child could profane except, as Bluebeard's little boy, liable to find the heads of other adventurous little boys, hanging to the hooks of the closet, therein. Ah me! The story of the old parlors! I have seen them once or twice opened for the wedding—but in those

days, every daughter preferred to be wedded under the apple-trees; but never was an ancestor "laid out" in other place. And so the old parlor brings back nothing else so plainly as the cold, still forms quiet in there, with little feet of strange-eyed children tiptoeing in to gaze on the face shrunken, and unnatural, amid the scent of old-fashioned flowers. Tiny forms, too, in little white dresses and with golden hair around their faces, once tossing about the place in play, little feet, so soon stayed in the race of life! "In the dim chamber, whence but yesterday passed my beloved, filled with awe I stand, and haunting loves fluttering on every hand whisper her praises who is far away," said John Hay. And it is all very true, of old parlors.

Very like haunted rooms in the memory are they. Full of strange, half-forgotten things. I doubt not every person who does me the honor of reading this has one of these rooms in memory if he be fifty years of age. They were the tribute of our fathers to social custom, the deference paid to the solemnities of life. To come into being! It might happen anywhere. To go from life—equally so. But the last memorial must have a place to fit the occasion. And so they set aside the best for this last. Here also all ultimate treasures of life went. Here the strange things that came from overseas, especially in seaport towns, were stored; the prized offerings brought with care from the far East in ships by those long since dead. The housewife herself rarely stepped within its portals and then only for careful dusting and in search of the evasive moth, which might corrupt. Here she looked with pride upon her best hoarding; on works of art, of doubtful value, that, to her, satisfied the longing of a soul that sought better things than kitchen or pantry could afford. Here she locked her woman's heart. Here she hung her best dress; here she kept her wedding secrets; her sentiment unrevealed; her womanly

dreams; her romances; her visions; all her memories of herself as a girl-bride. Here grandmothers came sometimes and wept. Here all mourning was done for death, the room being opened in sorrow, as the upper chamber, in which wept the father, for his son Absalom.

Haunted rooms! How many of them have you? All rooms of tragedy, in life and death—the places where souls have passed, where life has come, where weddings have been, where the little white bassinet has stood, where the first-born has started on the long journey most quietly. She is very little and the roads are lying in wait for her stirring feet. You never forget the scene. It is full of pictures, of the sun on the floor, the firelight playing from the fire-place, the flowers in the vase, the evening lamp!

And so, tonight, I am approaching once again the little old parlor. I turn the knob and peer within. It is dark and still. The light from the other room streams over the threshold. Do I hear the voices of them who once were there! Maybe. But I am not afraid. I am but happy, if so it be.

ON "LOVING THE SCHOOLMARM"



YOU have been in love, but you never loved anyone as you did a certain schoolmarm when you were a shock-haired, freckle-faced school boy a good many years ago. Some of them you hated from the first with a fierce and consuming hate, but one of them you fell for and you loved—oh, how you loved her.

Ten to one she was fat and had red cheeks and smooth hair and her figure! Ye gods! What a figger! When she came into school for the first time your heart stood still. You were consumed with passion!

You could not see straight. You couldn't recite! You couldn't read—you couldn't think. Here was Venus—only you didn't know anything about any Venuses;—here was Hebe and Ganymede. Here was Cleopatra and Helen of Troy. Here was your chance! If you were very good and noble and brave perhaps she would fall in love with you and then no knowing what might happen. You loved her.

There is no adoration like the boy-love, aged ten to thirteen. It dares all heights, even twenty-eight years of maidenhood. It is probable that she was bordering on the bank of thirty years—when the maid steps over the brink into old-maid terrain. As for you, she was just right. She was your fate if you could only impress the fact on her that you were a very unusual boy. You would study hard; graduate in a very short time; save her life from a runaway horse; or thru a hole in the ice; or you would go to sea and be gone a few weeks and come home with several million dollars and then you would clasp her in your arms and would whisper love to her and she would be yours. Or you would become a great general in some war and win her from the enemy and the wedding would be attended by all of the nobility.

You are really doing very well. You have begun to study. She notices it and sends you on errands, her dulcet voice setting your heart to thumping tremendously as she calls out, "William! Please come forward." You have no doubt for the instant that she will propose elopement, then and there, conquered by your manly graces. She wants you to take a note to some other teacher in some other school. You go on tip-toes and do not stop on the way. Things are coming along. You keep on dreaming. You will find her out some night helpless, in the fierce winter storm. She will be lying exhausted in the snow and you will be coming along; tripping gaily thru the five-

foot drifts, brushing the snows away like a rotary plow. You will see her fair form reclining before you. You will lift her 187 pounds like a feather—you who weigh 73 lbs. You will carry her fainting thru the storm. She will be rescued. Nothing doing but wedlock.

If you can be called to the front for some minor offense and get a seat under the schoolmarm's desk—it is not so bad. Good behavior does not seem to bring about the wedding-bells, so you will be a devil. You can get the seat all right. There is usually a waiting-list under the schoolmarm's desk. But you are persistent and you get there. It is dusty but you are near her. You become careless in your lessons. You get a licking from her. Excellent! Never hurt a bit. A whaling from those fair hands—a pastime! Come again. A man can't be bothered with arithmetic when passion storms thru his veins like a roaring flame thru a burning city. It is tragedy. Many a boy has known it—schoolmarms with plump figures, neat shoes and spring gowns having no conception of the amorousness flaming around them in evil-smelling boys. You get morose at home. Nobody understands you. Your father and mother don't understand you. You are about tired with life anyway. Something has got to happen pretty darn quick.

And it does happen. Some day a red-headed farmer comes to school and calls for the schoolmarm with a red sleigh and a good stepping horse. She blushes all over. He gets her to let school out earlier. He carts her off. Another boy says, "It's her feller." He knew. You contemplate suicide vigorously. Next day when she licks you you kick at her shins—those erstwhile darling shins garbed in white. Hooray! It is all over and you are redeemed. You are again happy. You hate the teacher. Now for study and fun!

ON "THE DOG ON THE BRIDGE"



DOG was coming over North Bridge in Lewiston yesterday noon. I say he was coming—he was not coming very fast because he was afraid. He was a fine-looking, long-eared hound, and as he walked along the bridge, his eyes caught the gleam of the river far below thru the cracks between the planking, and at once, to his eyes, the cracks widened and the boards narrowed and there he was hanging, between life and death, as we saw it, crouching and whining and picking his way from plank to plank.

It was all a matter of perspective. The dog had his nose and eyes too near to the ground. He failed of a proper angle of observation. A young woman passed us as I was trying to toll the dog along. Her head was high. She wore ear-rings; had golden hair; was looking pretty fine, thank you; marching off in short skirts and greenish yellow hose all the world like a couple of inverted Poland Water bottles. She never saw any river under the bridge. The poor dog could see nothing else.

We get a great deal of worry by not looking at things in a larger way than we sometimes do. If you hold a silver dollar up close to your eye, you can see nothing but the dollar. If you hold a doughnut up against your eye, hole in front, you miss the doughnut. There is a great art in life in focusing your troubles as well as your joys. It is better to look at a wild beast from a distance than to go up and look him in the eye. He may run off and never come your way, in the first case. In the second case, he may bite you. A lion in the offing is not the whole world. A lion in arms, tail up, six feet away, may be the end of the world.

And further—what a folly to see things only as things. The dog saw the water, but not in relation to the bridge nor did he see the bridge in relation to the safe conduct of society across the river. There are many people whom this war has made ill by mere foreboding. I do not mean those who have loved ones in danger—that is another matter. I refer to those persons who see nothing in the war but the water flowing under the bridge; nothing but the distance that the world may plunge. They have their eyes too close to the war. They should see that the war is a fore-ordained end of a wicked philosophy—the philosophy of the Superman. They should see that in the great movement of world evolution, this war is but a chapter—the chapter of regeneration and readjustment. They should see that it is not the end of society, but the beginning of a new society, better than the old. Terrible as it is, we must not look at it as of this age only. It is the medicine of a world that is to endure thruout the ages.

You may apply this plan in every-day life very sensibly. Half of the troubles that men and women get into are from not lifting their heads and looking over the situation before they decide to boil over with anger. In all quarrels there are two sides. Try to see them both. We get into a lot of difficulty by prejudging the motives of others. We make a lot of mistakes by deciding for ourselves how other people are likely to decide for themselves. We may well decide to look about a bit; see what is under our feet; feel the tread of the planks under us; watch the yellow-haired girls marching bravely on; consider that if you fall you will have to crawl thru a pretty small crack and let it go at that, with an appeal to the best judgment you have.

But whatever you do, get your perspective. Do not blind yourselves with troubles or fool yourselves look-

ng thru the hole in the doughnut. It takes equanimity to preserve equilibrium.

And after the dog got off the bridge, he barked and rapped and ran away like the wind. You see! He had been delayed on his journey by his fancied troubles. If you see the point—it's yours, gratis.

ON "WOMAN"



SINCE one may never foresee all of the statements of a woman, the wisest policy is not to take the trouble to see any of them. Woman's cruelest revenge is often to remain faithful to a man. Women should remember their origin and constantly think of themselves as a supernumerary bone. As women always know their own greatness, it is their smallness that we should divine. A woman's logic is remarkable in its simplicity; it consists in expressing one idea and reiterating it, endlessly.

A man tells what he knows, a woman tells what is pleasing; a man talks with knowledge, a woman talks with taste. A man never knows how to live until a woman has lived with him. The Queen of Sheba had only one eye, but she had a great heart.

"I shall not decide what is the first merit of woman; but ordinarily the first question which is asked about woman is, "Is she beautiful?" The second, "Has she wit?" There is nothing good about woman, except what is best in her. A woman may be homely, ill-shaped, ignorant, but ridiculous, never. A woman betrays you, she kills you, but she cries for you. Yet woman is the crime of man! She has been his victim since Eden. She wears on her flesh the trace of six thousand years. There are women who have made themselves miserable for life, for a man whom they

have ceased to love, because he has badly cut his nails or badly taken off his coat in company. A man is therefore responsible for his entire wife.

The one who may govern a woman, may govern a nation. Yet you should have a horror of instruction of woman for the reason so well understood in Spain, that it is easier to govern a people of idiots than a people of learned men. Politics in married life consists of three principles: The first is, never believe what a woman says; second, try to understand the spirit of her actions; and third, do not forget that a woman is never so talkative as when she keeps silent, and never so active as when she is at rest. Women possess better than men the art of analyzing the two human sentiments with which they are armed against us. They have the instinct of love, because it is their life, and of jealousy because it is the only means which they have to rule over us. And yet the first and most important quality of woman is sweetness. All of the reasons of a man are not worth one sentiment from a woman. A homely woman, who is also good, is an angel and should be beatified. A beautiful woman, who is also good, should have four pairs of wings and two motors. A homely woman may be wicked, but she is never silly about it. And a beautiful woman can never be silly, provided the man is sufficiently in love. Beauty covers a multitude of sins.

As to woman's wisdom! Women should never be permitted to go to church. What sort of conversation can they hold with God? In what way are women inferior to men? Is it not the fact that they shook before him the tree of science? The Greeks who created all the gods, symbolized wisdom by Minerva. Atheism is the horizon of bad consciences. There never was a woman atheist. Thanks to Eve, who shook the tree of science, women know everything without having learned anything. In wisdom, all of

the Eves and Magdalenes are novels of which one should read only the prefaces. To read all the chapters would take too long. To skip pages is risky. Yet one who has read the book called woman, knows more than the one who has grown pale in libraries. Ultimately, woman is the reason of man. If it be woman who shows the way to heaven, it is woman who makes one love earth. And nevertheless, there are women who are only gowns. What are you going to do about it? Keep a bulldog?

And of woman's love, a million words would be but as one, compared to the words written of it. On the maternal bosom, rest the wit of nations, their prejudices and their virtues—in other words, human civilization. In the thought of God there are only two women to be involved in the life of a man: his mother and the mother of his children. Many women live and die by the heart. There are men; there is woman. Woman is queen of creation. A woman's real love is like piety. It comes late in life. A woman is rarely devout or in love at twenty. Women wish to be loved; and when they are, they are often annoyed or worse. They flirt; to flirt is to love, in water-colors. Love is poetry, but marriage is an exact science. Some women marry from tradition and then wake up to find it perdition. If you are going to love, pass up your judgment. Finally, woman and her love and all that, are the Alpha and the Omega, hell and paradise, good and evil, the fall and the redemption.

There! Think over that. It is strictly a collaboration, out of my note book, culled from reading and selection. Each of them is an epigram. They are strung together, like pearls and paste, on the same string. They are good and bad indifferently. A few of them I wrote myself. They are no worse or better than the others. And probably no more or less true. If you sniff at any one of them remember, you may be

sniffing at Baudelaire, or Anatole France, or Paul Sabatier, or Voltaire, or Jean Jaques, the old dear; or at Ben Franklin, or at Thackeray, or at Solomon, or at the Book of Judges. So bear with me for a bit of fun; and tomorrow, I will write strictly of moral things.

ON "GIVING ADVICE, GRATIS"



LADY friend of mine is in trouble. She went to the doctor the other day for purposes of pulchritude. She is a comely lady, anyway, and needn't have worried.

But she went; and came back to her home in one of these cities—I prefer not to locate it too closely—with two bottles of medicine; one was pink and the other was greenish. One was to make the hair grow on her beautiful head; the other was to make the flesh of her fair arms yet more peachy, and remove all hirsute disfigurement.

Women are often careful. Some women are very much more careful than some men. Carelessness is not a sex-characteristic. I have seen men so thoughtless that they couldn't remember that socks should be of one color, i.e., that no well-dressed man should wear one green, one blue. No woman would do that. Women rarely are careless about color. They usually harmonize tints. But when a woman IS thoughtless she can beat man all the way from sole to dandruff. This friend of mine is so busy about being kind and generous, as a rule, that she forgets details. So when she got home and told about her visit to the beauty-doctor and about what he said and didn't say, and had produced the hair-medicine and the face and arm medicine—the one warranted to make hair grow and the other warranted to remove it, she had only an indistinct memory of the purpose of each. She wasn't

quite sure whether the pink or the green produced long and luxurious curly locks or removed them, or vice versa.

Said I, "Wallace Maxfield used to make a hair restorer and it was green. I wish you had some of that, and if I had thought of it in time I could have saved you a trip to the doctor; for his was a wonderful 'invigorator.' We used to treat it very carefully. Wallace never handled it without gloves for fear of beating out Esau. He got some on his finger-nails once and the hair grew out all over them. If he had cared, he could have grown hair enough on the end of his thumb to have made it do duty as a shaving-brush.

"Mercy!" exclaimed the lady.

"Yes," continued I, "he got some by accident on the doorknob of his old shop once—one of those white china doorknobs, and he had to shave the doorknob every day for a week until the effect of the stuff wore off. That was greenish in color. Then he had a detergent—I think it was pinkish. That worked just as well the other way. He could wave a bottle of this over a hair mattress, then: Excelsior! there would not be a hair in it. Customers used to bring old buffalo coats in to be treated. He could drop about twenty drops of this on a patchy old buffalo coat and take the hair off of it smooth and clean where partially worn, and then by applying the "invigorator" which was greenish, the buffalo hair would grow within twenty minutes, restoring it to its original beauty. Trouble was the stuff was too powerful. I wish—"

"Then you think that probably the greenish is the prescription for my head," said the lady. "Then that settles it."

It did settle it, and so far as I can see, settled it all right. The lady called at our house Sunday to see me and ask somewhat excitedly if I saw any difference in her appearance. I told her that she looked beautiful,

as usual, but that perhaps there was a bit of extra gloss on her upper lip and was it swollen, and what was the matter with the high lights on her nose, and did she have a cold that made her eyes look a little swollen. And what was—

“Apart from that I’m all right?” exclaimed she. “Well, I want you to know that you told me all wrong. I’ve been using hair medicine on my face and skin remedy on my hair, and I’m so worried I don’t know what to do. The pink medicine is ‘invigorator,’ as you call it, and the other is the opposite, and I expect from all you have said to have whiskers on my face and a nice, glossy, peachy skin on the top of my head, and hair on my arms and a mustache, and I’ll have to shave and wear a wig and—oh, it’s all your fault, boo, hoo!”

This is my situation and the state of mind in which I find myself this Monday morning on returning to my duties. The moral that I want to bring to you, dear reader, is to beware of my failing, which is giving advice, except for pay. More friendships have been broken by advising persons unprofessionally on mooted points, than any other way. If you make a charge it is different. You are then protected by the law of caveat emptor. You know there was Cassandra. Apollo loved her, but she threw him down. The god got mad and he made Cassandra a confirmed advice-giver, free, too, without charge, a she-prophet; with this condition, nobody would ever follow her predictions. She was always dead right. She knew, did Cassandra, but nobody believed her. Most of us are unlike Cassandra. And that’s the danger. The New Year is on! Let’s all take a brace and only give advice as a matter of business, at so much per diem or per advice, office hours and all that.

As yet there is a chance for you to avoid danger and perhaps for me to escape. The lady is not yet bald

nor does she bear any resemblance to Charles E. Hughes; but if she develops later and you follow my fate and it compares with Cassandra, you will see why things look gloomy to me.

ON "OLD PICTURES IN THE JUNK SHOP"



IN A CERTAIN junk-store in Lewiston are two pictures in mahogany frames of fifty years ago; sturdy faces of a man and a woman, looking out on the busy street. They are photographs of a fine up-standing, prosperous couple, some countryfolk of a generation long since gone.

One cannot pass this shop without seeing these pictures, thus disposed for sale among the other junk; and thus seeing them one must feel a sense of sadness at this desecration of some home that from the look of these faces, must have been once prosperous and happy.

What fate has sent the portraits of these people into such a shop, to be put up for sale? Is it not monstrous that relatives and friends did not consign them at least to the happier fate of destruction? There must have been some heir or residuary legatee who had the power silently to lay away these venerable faces and let them be forgot, if there be none, who now would care to recall them. How short is human love; how soon passes consideration even for the memories of the dead!

The other day we saw a string of gold beads in the possession of a great granddaughter. She had small regard for them and spoke slightly of them. But I could recall the picture of a fragile little grandmother, sitting in a low chair by a window in a warm mid-summer afternoon. A huge willow tree brushed the little

window to the west and the low hum of bees was in a hive just outside, among all the clover tops that the world could seemingly ever grow. There was caraway in the tall, straggling bushes, by the side of the willow-trunk, and away and away over the hills and beyond their purple rims, was the World, to me. The Gospel Banner, a stout Universalist weekly, lay in her lap and her hands were folded. Around her neck was this string of gold beads—and never day or night was she without them. They should have been buried with her as she sat hands folded, all mysteries solved, at Peace.

And so it is with the old pictures and the old photograph albums that are found kicking around in the old book-stores or piled away in attics. If they could speak and the beating hearts once more be revived and with them all the pleasure, love and hope that once these photographs carried, we should hear stout objection to the neglect to which they are now subjected. These pictures that are found in the old junk shop—it takes little to re-create the scene as the old father and mother went happily away to the photographer's to have these pictures made, as a memorial to loving children. It may have been the consummation of some wedding anniversary; some tribute to the hanging of the crane in the young manhood and womanhood when all of the world lay before them and all was bright with love and courage. It takes little, as I say, to re-create the happy home; the evening fire-side; the tender care of children; the patient labor over little frocks and baby-things; the weary toil for better conditions; the sacrifices for schooling; the passing out into the world of the young; the loneliness of age; and now this! Better oblivion than the disgrace of the junk-shop.

I should hope that a law might be passed against sale of the intimate mortuary things of men—intimate

pictures, the stones over the graves of the dead. It is hard to contemplate what may happen to our own. "What song the syrens sang or what name Achilles assumed when he hid himself among the women," as Sir Thomas Browne says, were easier to know than what shall become of us as, looking our best, believing that there are those that love us, we consign ourselves to the photographer and send down thru the ages a very capable looking simulacrum. We may be very proud of it and hope for a tender consideration until at least it shall have grown old-fashioned. But the pictures that we frame in mahogany and hang on the wall and consecrate to the household gods and expect to be respected—what mercy is shown by those that come after us, if in the hour, when the old home shall be broken up and the roof-tree vanish and the soul go out of the home, some kindly hand put not the torch to the intimate things and lay our mahogany-framed likeness on some funeral-pyre to send up in flames what was once the spirit of the home. Dust and ashes! Better than a junk-shop and a ten-cent sale!

ON "THE WOODS OF GOD"



THIS calling—I can hear it—all over the land they are hearing it and, afar off where the guns are roaring and the shells are boring into the soil of France, they are hearing it—the call of the woods of Maine.

I saw a letter the other day, from a boy over there. Said he, "Dad, I am happy over here, doing what I feel to be my duty, but, next to seeing you and mother, is the desire that I feel to set out with you, in the crisp, frosty morning of one of our late October days for the good old trip to the woods. We'll have it yet, in peace and plenty. And we'll never kill another

living thing—just the woods, the silent woods, the woods of God.”

Yes—it’s calling! Tugging at the heart-strings of men, buried half underground in machine-rooms, press-rooms, under the hatches of ships; in factories; in counting rooms; in shops; in banks; in schools; out on treeless plains. Only the other day I met a man, deep down in the thunder of the roaring presses of a Boston newspaper, head-pressman, never saw him before; had not talked with him two minutes when, finding that I came from Maine, he said: “I go every spring to Kennebago to fish, every fall to the woods of Maine to sit in the silence and see the big trees. I work for that.” And his eyes lighted and he was poet, philosopher, dreamer all at once, as he is, by the way, the star pressman of Boston.

What is it that calls? It is the lure of perfect peace, unstained by man—that is what! When the rifle rings and the deer falls and man advances on him, with knife to flesh and blood to run—the heaven becomes a little hell. But not for long! The trees look down in silent contempt; the winds go over softly sighing; the chickadee hops along with his old foolish plaint; the bluejay chatters in the tall tops; and under-foot—are the silence, slow-gathering moss, deep decay, death and birth, unto which man may come in reverence and depart in peace. This is the lure for them that truly love it, this is the call that never will cease its reiteration.

The woods of God! Singularly, the most irreverent feels that. I read the other day a story of three men who traveled in mighty places where great trees lifted their heads and great hills stood on end and deep lakes bosomed themselves in mountain fastnesses. One of them was an atheist. For him, there was no God. Wherever he went, he explained everything by science; scoffing at enthusiasms until his lowly guides

with nothing but time-worn faiths, were silent. Finally they came to a place of surpassing beauty; glory piled on glory; peaks in the blue; trees on the peaks; colors of jade and gold and all of the spectrum—and they stood in silent awe, until the lowliest guide of all broke the silence with a shout, “Mebbe, sir, there ain’t no God NOW; but by thunder there WAS once.”

So you feel in the woods. It is a tryst with your soul. It is a visit to the shrine of the Most High. It is the solitude of the association with the Unseen. It is a breath out of the dawn of the hereafter, whence cometh the healing. To sit on a mossy log amid the gathering snow-flakes, miles from camp; to wander in the twilight over hard paths and see the rabbit run and hear the partridge gathering her brood; to see the colors run in the undergrowth from pale pink to thin mauve and bleak gray; to hear the winds overhead; to feel the smart tug of the frosty night—to see at last the lights of camp break thru the forests and be home again! It is religion and everything else combined.

Weariness not often cometh to the flesh alone. It is to the intellectual and the spiritual elements of a man that it first comes. The “pep” is the first to go and that is in the dynamo. In the woods of Maine are all the balsams for the healing of the heart of man. The chase, if you will, for impulse—the Woods, if you seek the real thing for your regeneration. It is the “pep” that first comes back to you. And when the big woods go—what will men do? We know not. Better than drugs are they. Those who determine destinies of simple folk must not forget this. Sad the day when Nations forget that “Back to Nature” is a primordial command. Sad the day—if we do not provide for all time, taverns in the forests for the rest of weary mind and soul—great forest preserves, parks in primeval state, by running waters in deep woods of God.

ON "MAINE IN AUTUMN"



HIS is the season when Maine stands on the hill-tops looking out over the autumn world. She has left the summer highway, the fields waving in the sunshine, the brooks running sweetly to the sea; the sea, itself, she has left gray and whitening in the winds—to stand up here, like a woman in scarlet, waiting for the snow-flakes to drive her in.

She is fair above all others, is Maine, in this October season. No other land compares with her. I have seen Colorado in the Autumn, with the yellow aspens in the mountain tops. Up crest and down they run, ever the same ceaseless yellow of the buttercup. But what is that by the side of the hills of Maine? She is like the woman of the Song of Solomon, "Thy lips are like the thread of scarlet; honey and milk are under thy tongue; the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon. Awake! O. North wind; come! thou South." From hill to hill Maine flaunts her ribands. From peak to peak, flames the curve of her lips. In valley and on hillsides spread her garments, of all the colors of the celestial dye-pots. And there she stands, like the apocalypse of a sunset of the gods! What pageantry! what beauty, here in Maine!

Autumn! already the first storms of an approaching winter have swept the land. The black willows stand bare along the edges of the river. The last summer guest is packing for home. The only sound of the outside world is the dull throb of the sportsman's gun in the distant thickets and the passing of the automobile, loaded with sportsmen bound for the deep woods for the big game. The deer have left the fields for the forests and are skirting the ridges where the beech-trees stand, dun brown or deep yellow in the

amber light of the October sun. The trout have said good-bye to the angler for another six months. The bear is looking over the fields and standing perchance on some lonely hill, feeling the tingle of the evening approach, that suggests a snug hole in a winter's sleep. The air is very still. The fine sound of crickets that one hears in September has gone, and no longer the late grasshopper rises in clouds under foot. Afar, thru a red haze of maple-leaves you may see the smoke of some distant towns, but what are towns by the side of these hills, clothed in raiment ecstatic, radiant, flaming as the fires of the northern lights where the Hyperborean gods are burning brush-fires till all the fire departments of Heaven cannot stop them.

It is not for any writer of halting prose or for any minor poet, to describe this glorious land of ours—Maine—in October. It seems an anomaly, that when poets seek simile, they go to Capri or Ischia or the Vale of Chamouni, when they might come up here into the vestibule of Heaven, and get the pictures for their fancy. The maple-tree, standing red against the green of the spruce, whose pyramidal tops rise as out of a garden of poppies and roses and all other fervid color, is of itself enough to bring one ten thousand miles to see. The "clear bright scarlet leaves of the sumac hang down like a soldier's sash," said Thoreau. I have, myself, seen from the shores of Moosehead a line of ten million, million colors stretching forty miles away. And I saw it yet again, reflected in the mirrored surface of the lake on whose blue surface the clouds of the sky floated! And back of this, piled up, Pelion on Ossa, arose great mountains of the same color. And in the mirror of the lake the mountains also were painted. And my boat floated in color and climbed mountain peaks of scarlet and sank into the bosom of flaming gardens. And the colors steeped to my very soul!

We do not talk enough about this State. We do not tell the truth about it. We are like men living among acres of diamonds and not knowing that they are beautiful, because they are so common. We say as we look at those things that God has given us and us alone, "There is nothing in Europe to equal that." Foolish man; there is nothing anywhere except in Heaven to begin to compare with Maine, in her autumn radiance. And I am not so all-fired sure about there being anything to equal it in Heaven.

ON "MAKING OUT YOUR INCOME TAX"



FIGURE it as you please, no man can make out an income tax, the first time, and have it balance. I have made out mine, recently, and know. And today I cannot tell whether I owe the government \$872.19 or the government owes me \$94. I am naturally inclined to the latter opinion; but I can't tell until I get acquainted with the meaning of fiduciary and amortization and can tell the difference between a tax-covenant bond and a non-resident alien.

The point is right here in my income tax: did I contribute under the vocational rehabilitiztion act (see Sect. E) "to an amount not in excess of 15 per cent of net income as computed without the benefit of this paragraph, such contributions allowable as deductions only if verified by the Commissioner with the approval of the Secretary," or did I in the case of buildings "allow for the amortization of the cost of such part of the buildings as had been borne by the tax-payer." It seems to me as tho I did, and then again when I wake up, it seems as tho I did not.

I amble along in my study of my income tax and it occurs to me that "in cases under paragraph four of

subdivision A and in case of any income from an estate during the period of administration or settlement permitted by subdivision (c) to be deducted from the net income paid by fiduciary, the tax shall not be paid by the fiduciary." If this be so, then it makes some difference.

I was working on my income tax yesterday all by myself—with no expert assistance, because I desired to find out how the matter struck a common, uneducated mind. I figured persistently and by adding in the amortizations and subtracting the fiduciaries, I found that under section (g) Part IV, title "Payment of Taxes," I owed the government \$872.19. This was more than I expected, because I never had \$872.19 in all my life at one time. The nearest I ever had was \$400, when I went on my wedding trip, and I had it all in one-dollar bills, so as to impress my new wife with a plethoric bank-roll. I may say in passing that her dream has been shattered.

The perspiration gathered on my brow as I looked at the \$872.19 and I read, "In any suit or action brought to enforce payment of taxes made due and payable by virtue of the provisions of this section, the finding of the commissioner, made as hereinunder provided, shall be for all purposes presumptive evidence of the taxpayer's design, whether made after notice to the taxpayer or not." Of course if the "finding" of the Commissioner included the finding also of the \$872.19, it would be all right, but farther on, I notice that if neither of us can find it, "all individuals, whether acting as lessees, or mortgagors of property, fiduciaries, employers, with interest, annuities, amortizations, salaries, compensations, emoluments or other gains (not including gain in flesh) who fail to pay, shall be sent to jail for a year and punished by paying a fine which floats before my dazed eyes so oddly that

sometimes it looks like \$1,000 and sometimes as \$10,000.

It seemed wrong to me to be obliged to pay \$872.19, not ever having had so much and not being able to borrow it, so that for a time it looked as tho I should either have to give up writing these "Just Talks" after March 10th, or else write them from jail—which would be perhaps just as pleasant as writing them where I do now. And then I noticed that "If a fiscal-year partnership ends during a calendar year, the rates for the preceding calendar year shall apply to such part of the fiscal year as the proportion which such fiscal year with the said calendar year, bears to the full fiscal year, and the rates for the said calendar year during the said fiscal year shall apply to the remainder."

"If that is so," said I to myself, "it may perhaps simplify it." Then I began over again and, using the same figures exactly, and adding the fiscal to the calendar and subtracting all the amortizations from all the fiduciaries; adding in the non-resident aliens; taking a due proportion of the remaining consolidated invested capital and deducting the amount paid on one per centum of the tax-covenant stocks paid at the source, and not covered by sur-tax as provided in Sect. (2) Table III, I found that the Government owes me over \$90. I am willing to add a couple of fiduciaries and call it square.

We have lost two valuable employees already from figuring income tax. One of them has moved to Porto Rico where, according to Sec. 261, the Porto Rican Legislature has the power to amend, alter or repeal income tax laws. The other man was quietly working when his head burst, with a loud report. He died from an amortization, combined with an embolism and untroubled by emoluments.

ON "WATCH YOUR STEP"



PART of these Talks must necessarily be biographical, because I know more about myself than I know about anyone else, in spite of the fact that an anonymous correspondent who signed herself "One of the Brave," told me the other day that I was a nanny-goat, or words to that effect, and that I ought to go out and take a walk around myself and look myself over, having evidently been pampered all my life and never knowing what it was to work for a living. Good gracious!

Well! this one is about a time when I was not pampered, so far as I can judge. I was eleven years old and went barefoot summers and sported a set of lingerie consisting of one pair of linen pants, somewhat dome-shaped in the rear, and one cotton shirt. It is a story of what happens to anyone who does not look where he is stepping, and I will place my moral right here. Watch your step! If you are an anonymous hero, keep out of mischief. If you are a free-roamer, keep out of trouble. If you are planning a serious step, especially evil, watch out.

It was my intention to go gunning, on this bright and beautiful summer day; but I was lacking two things—a gun and ammunition. My uncle had both, but was not inclined to be considerate. So I decided to turn burglar. That was where I should have watched my step. Fathers and mothers, read this to your children and show them ME, about to take the first step in evil. And be sure to follow me to the finish.

My uncle kept his ammunition on the top shelf in the woodshed. As I was hardly tall enough to put a bridle on a goat, he thought it was out of reach. But it was not. Under the shelf was a barrel. I secured

the gun from my uncle's bedroom—false step No. 1. It was loaded. Clutching it tightly, as a boy will, I climbed to the top of the barrel and reached up for the ammunition. It was here that I made false step No. 2. The barrel top was one of those old-fashioned ones made a trifle smaller than the barrel and held in place on the top by a board nailed across and resting on the chines. It upset; did a double turn, and I disappeared in the barrel, gun and all.

Now, if you were taking a first step in crime, what sort of a material would you prefer falling into? Jam, maybe! Mine was soft-soap; and I slid into that barrel of soft soap, just as slick and just as far as any boy ever slid into trouble in all this wide world. I never fitted into anything else in all my life, so absolutely tight and smooth as I did into that soap. It came up past—long past, the dome of "them pants." It came up past the tail of that cotton shirt. It came up past my collar button and, thank the Lord, or I would not be a nanny-goat today, it rested just at my chin and I was not able to see over the top of the barrel.

And that was not all. I couldn't climb out. Ever try to climb out of the affectionate embrace of a barrel of soft-soap? Ever try to dig your toes into the side of a barrel of soft-soap? You stand more chance of being a member of the peace conference. I hollered. Nobody heard me. My voice came back, slippery and all over lather. I yelled half an hour, no response.

Then I took step No. 3. I resurrected the gun from the depths of the soap and fired it straight at the kitchen door. Grandfather and grandmother were there! Oh yes! They were there! And a yard of soap leaping thru the air and a fine assortment of bird-shot went hurtling into the peace of that August afternoon. I never knew just what happened. Grandfather didn't, either. He says he saw it coming! The shot mercifully spared the old couple, but the soap!

Oh my! It gave grandpa a shave and a shampoo and a hair-cut and a Saturday night bath and dyed his whiskers. It drove grandma into a state of soft-soap never before seen in the annals of that town. It killed the canary bird and shook the fleas out of the dog. It trimmed the cat's whiskers and gave her a facial massage. It cleaned the house and changed all of the furniture around. It almost lifted the mortgage.

But it saved my life and preserved me for posterity and made me so clean that I have never taken a wrong step since. So! Watch your step.

ON "LITTLE SHAVERS"



S I WAS going to work the other day I saw a "little shaver" standing up against a hydrant, waiting for a car to take him to school. I can tell a "little shaver" when I see him. He is always Somebody's little shaver, bearing the marks of somebody's care in sending him forth, somebody's kisses on his cheek! somebody's palpitating worry as he sets forth; somebody's waiting until he returns.

This little shaver was dressed in a khaki overcoat and a khaki billy-cock hat, set on the side of his head with much art. Around his neck was hung a canvas case, like those in which the doughboys carried their gas masks "over there." He permitted me to look into it. It held his books, his luncheon, his paper-pad. This little shaver was about five years old, I should reckon. He made my heart warm and my eyes rather moist at the thought of other days and certain motherly cares of my own. I asked him who "packed his kit." He said, "My muvver."

Little shavers are what induce men and women to struggle on seeking something that shall make life

worth living for little shavers, which will probably be more "little shavers" for sacrificial tears and troubles, and so on and on; for the world is not coming to an end, and men and women are to be happier as the ages come and as Pentecost draws nigh. Women carry little shavers under their hearts. Men carry them in their joy and pride. And they send them out as the "muvver" had sent this one out, to take their chances, just as clean and well equipped as possible, and with their sack and scrip all prepared.

The world also ought to be a sort of mother and father to little shavers. They should not be trampled on or hurt. The strong who have authority would do well to take a look at little boys and little girls going to and fro, some to school, some carrying dad's dinner-pail, some playing about the street, and remember that they are wards of society, of laws, of public service, of equities in public domain, of human right, of educational advantages, of protection from public evil. In every legislative-hall should be a picture of childhood in some form. Every year there should be a general accounting by State and Nation as to what is being done for childhood. Trite enough is the saying: "They are the men and women of tomorrow;" but truth is often trite and the "ten commandments do not budge" no matter how often assailed, nor do they become stale, how often repeated.

We would all like to be "little shavers" all over again, would we not, just to tell other little shavers, out of our now broadened experience with life, what love their parents truly bear them; what toil they necessitate; what sacrifices they imply; what anguish they occasion; what worry they bring. We would like to tell all boys and girls the duty they owe to mothers; how careful they should be of them, how tenderly they should regard them.

Little shavers! How stolidly they go about, taking all as a matter of course! Giving little save now and then, when by climbing sleepily into mother's or father's arms they pillow weary heads on happy hearts.

The infinitude of parental love! What means it, if it does not signify the infinitude of the Greater Love that a Universal Father bears toward all us "little shavers" here below, careless, indifferent, thoughtless, but destined to come home some night from the long, long school, find the light streaming from the doorway of the House and content to pillow a weary head on a bosom of infinite love! If not this, then what does it all mean? What availeth it if love here passes with little shavers!

ON "KILLING THE PIG"



AFTER a period of more or less familiar acquaintance with a family pig, the boys in our neighborhood came to feel affectionately disposed toward him. We used to wander instinctively toward the pig-pen in moments of abstraction, to nurse griefs and wait for the tingle of the hickory in dad's hands to evaporate. There was fitness in weeping into a pig-pen. There was sociability in the pig's sympathetic grunts of welcome. When all else was against us, it did seem as though the pig loved us. At least he never found any fault with us—which was more than we could say of anyone else about the premises.

So, when it came pig-killing season, every boy had a duty to attend the obsequies far and near. At school the commonest question was, "When's your pig goin' to be killed?" We kept a list of pig-killings and waited them as a mournful, yet eager, festival. Many a tedious mile have I walked over roads in the country with

other boys, on the way to pig-killings. Yet I recall having seen the overt act but once, and then the bloody jowls and the piercing screams of the dying porker convinced me that once was enough. It must have been the ceremonial, rather than the ceremony, that attracted us. I have had the same impressions later in certain performances of *Oliver Twist*, where Bill Sykes massacres Nancy. One look satisfied me. After that, I preferred to close my eyes and consider the thing done, in spite of me.

Of course, every boy whose own pig was being killed, held for the time being autocratic relations to the rest of the community of boys. He was host *ex pigofficio*. He was President of the Boy-Snouts. He took us around previous to the obsequies, provided we arrived in season. He introduced us to the soon-to-be-lamented. He called the pig by name and we all looked in silence into the unsuspecting, if somewhat narrow and contracted, eyes of the pig. We had thoughts—at any rate I know I had 'em—on the passing of the finite into pork. We gave him a last farewell scratching with the handy hoe. Then the host took us around and showed us the shears on which the dead was to be elevated; the boiling vat into which he was to be plunged for purposes of tonsorialism. He promised certain recondite portions of the pig's anatomy to different boys—all except the bladder.

The arrival of the butcher; the bustling about many things; the goings and comings of men and women; the steaming of the great kettles; the final approach of the butcher to the pen; the invariable sudden fear of the animal; the occasional chase around the yard with a fat butcher hanging to a pig's tail—all these are firmly fixed in memory. Enough! The squeals still ring in memory. Alas for the order of the universe that says that beasts shall die for the food of a folk! We gathered about the reeking carcass where it lay and

often wept a tear. "Poor old Buster," said the boy, "I won't ever bring you any more dinner."

But tears pass. The proper manicuring of a pig is something that had a peculiar fascination for the old-fashioned boy. I suppose that the modern boy would find nothing interesting in it. He cares for nothing that he can get for nothing. His ideas are fixed on a chummy-roadster and the moving-picture. The simple bucolic divertisements of lang syne are old stuff. He wouldn't even be interested in an old-fashioned soap-making or a corn-husking. He would not swap his jack-knife for a pig's bladder. But with most old-fashioned boys a dried and properly cured pig's bladder was something for which a boy would barter his hope of immortality, and not to blame—the hope of immortality being a matter of future consideration. Most old-fashioned boys have blown themselves red in the face over the pipe-stem of a pig's bladder, and when the job was done have enjoyed nothing else so much as the chance to step up behind another boy and give him a resounding welt with it behind the ear.

These are things that it is well to recur to now and then, as indicative of the simpler joys of boyhood, in the days of simpler life. We are all boys to more and more extent. Life in general has become equally complex. Men and women are no longer satisfied with neighborhood matters. But the question intrudes, are they any happier now than then? Is life sweeter and better, with all of the luxury of the present, than in the simple day when it was no trouble "to keep up with Lizzie," and when, if you had a pig to kill and a Holy Bible on the center table and a barrel of soft-soap, you were the people?"

ON "THE PUSSY-WILLOW"



MAYBE you have already seen children coming along the streets that lead homeward from the outlying brooks and ponds these March days, with arms full of pussy-willows, and you have felt suddenly tender again toward life and considerate of how steadily the calm world of Nature pursues her way, unvexed by all of the ant-like skurrying to and fro, of man and nations of men. Out of the past rise memories of yourself as a child searching for the first signs of the little furry catkins and eagerly bringing them home, to tempt again the old-time miracle of faith; that if put where it was exactly warm enough—in the cuddly toe of a little shoe by the warm fireside—out of the night and all its wonders, might emerge, by way of the immaculate conception of the pussy-willow, a dear little roly-poly kitten, with very bright eyes and a spiky little tail firmly standing erect, waiting there or else rolling over (kitten, tail, and all) before the fire when you arose in the morning. Disappointment never raised a doubt. There was ever a reason and ever a failure.

So we see, each recurring spring, the coming of the children, bearing the pussy-willow as a rite and religion of childhood, of the spirit of resurrection, in the very heart of the world. And the pussy-willow has a perfect right, of its own dear little self, to have a place of distinction in the episode. For it is first on the spot; first of all vegetation to feel the kiss of the lovely Sprite that tiptoes first to the brookside and along the oozy borders of the ponds. Here, screened from March gales and winter snows, in response to the touch of spring, the pussy-willow puts off her brown winter coat and begins to glisten in the furry little

dress that is so soft, warm and beautiful. And it is odd that where Spring first finds her way out, there she also departs, for, along the borders of the pond, the last glimpse of vegetation endures in autumn, as it shows first in the spring.

Another thing that may interest us all about our little friend the pussy-willow, is that childhood, everywhere the world-over, has the same love for it. There is not a place in the world where the willow does not grow in some form. It is along the equator, in the far-off polar regions as far as any vegetation whatever endures of the tree-type, and with many uses, from material weaving baskets and reeds, to making charcoal and bringing great returns to some people who have raised the willow commercially. In olden days, it was used instead of the palm in the church festivals and appropriately as a symbol of the resurrection, for it has strange powers latent within it. You can hardly kill a willow twig. Put it away and allow it nearly to dry and desiccate and yet put it into the earth and give it moisture, and from the bare twig will set out roots and buds and it will struggle into fresh green again in the bravest and most resolute way. It has a singular reserve in leaf-buds. It keeps many of them against day of need. If fire sweeps in willow, or it becomes parched by drought and seemingly dies, the first touch of moisture will start out the reserve buds and again it is on its way as tho nothing had happened. You have seen the willow-tree cut off at its base and left in a condition that would discourage the ordinary tree; and yet, in a year or two, there it is again, all foliage, springing from the slender withes about the trunk.

After the children have brought in the pussy-willow and the miracle of spring is on its way, the catkins become either silver or yellow. You find them swollen and fat. The golden ones are loaded with the

stamens; the silver with the pistils. And soon the bees are busy; flying from the silver to the gold, fertilizing them with the pollen on their feet, while they get the first honey of the new year. And then, by and by, much later in the year, the willows are again shining in the golden light with long, waving burdens of the seeds that float away on land rivers and are so prolific that by nature's scheme if one in a billion lodges happily and grows, the balance of nature is preserved, so far as the pussy-willow tree is concerned.

So—here it is again, the new March-time in the arms of childhood, coming down the street, the pussy-willow! Wonder what is within the furry coat! What mystery of life; what casket of the Lord God's own placing! "Who knoweth the balancings of the clouds and how thy garments are warm when He quieteth the earth by the south wind? Hath the rain a father and who hath begotten the drops of dew?" How little we know—less even than Job! Little children know more than we—for they at least see miracles in the pussy-willow—while we often pass even the little children by and see no miracles, only Things.

ON "THE TITLE AND THE FAMILY"



OMEHOW, I always supposed that if I had been born a prince I would wear a feather in my cap and go around on a pony and never be called by any other name than my title. It never occurred to me that I should be concerned with having a father or a mother—mere appendages of childhood, useful chiefly at bed-time and in the dark watches of the night when dream-horrors come and we cry out for

help, feeling sure of the tender watchfulness of motherhood.

I used to read Fairy stories a good deal and my notion of a palace was perhaps distorted. There was little else for a prince to do than be waited upon. He clapped his hands and servants appeared. Of course a Prince never had to go to school. There were no permutations or combinations and the doctrine of chances never was to enter the case at all. Algebra was for studious boys, not for princes, and as for finding the perimeter of a duodecagon—the idea! I would not bother even to learn to spell—and as a matter of fact, the old-fashioned princes and princesses did not bother to spell; not even to read printing.

The foregoing idea of royal households is possibly not unique with me. I find some of my neighbors have a rather hazy notion of a royal menage. Some of them seem to feel that a prince approaches his father, the King, on bended knee; salutes him lowly and says "Your Majesty," and never "dad." I have often wondered myself, and perhaps you have wondered, if queens ever kiss their children; ever wipe their noses; ever take off their bibs; ever spank them; ever call them by baby-names. Is love left out of royalty? Are domesticity and diet unknown in the palaces? Do princes call each other "Bill" or "Ed," or "Harry" or "Jim?" Do little princes have old Grannies, tender and dear old Grannies, to whom they can go in grief and who will give them two lumps of sugar in their tea (as Harry Lauder says his old Grannie did, when he went to visit her as a boy and for which he loves all old Grannies the world over, today) and do they have Grandpops also?

I want you to know that I am not writing this as an advocate of royalty. None of the crowned heads are paying me any money for doing this piece of writing. I am just maundering along wondering

about things in my own way. I am rather inclined to say that royalty does not interest me at all; humanity is what interests me—the simple fact that all human beings, rich and poor, plutocrat, king, bourgeois, commoner, aristocrat, proletariat, are on the dead level when it comes to love of the helpless little mite that lies blue-veined within its mother's arms. We are all fathers, mothers, children, uncles, aunts, daddies, grand-daddies and grannies.

The other day Congressman White of Lewiston, who says he reads this column religiously, for purpose of the humanities herein said to be contained, sent me a copy of the London Times that had escaped my notice—for I do read the Times. It contained an account of the death of Prince John, youngest son of George and Victoria Mary. He had been a poor little invalid all of his life and human love plainly was showered upon him by all around him. He never was seen in public; for he had a disease which is called epilepsy and he might be seized anywhere. He was about fourteen years old when he died in his sleep. He was buried in a coffin made from an oak-tree grown at Sandringham, where he died Jan. 24, 1919.

At the funeral, which was private, there were flowers from the family only and from the people of the household. The flowers from the parents bore a card which read, "For our darling Johnnie, from his sorrowing parents." The child's grandmother, who is Queen Alexandra, wife of the late King Edward VII., placed upon the simple little coffin a cross of lilies and orchids with this inscription: "In remembrance of my darling little Johnnie, Grannie's precious grandson, whose memory will never fade. May he rest in peace forever with the Lord, tho we miss him sorely here, on earth. From his poor old Grannie, Alexandra." The little lad's sister and brother sent a wreath with this inscription on the card: "For

darling Johnnie, from his sister and brothers, David, Bertie, Harry, George and Mary."

There you are—not a prince in it! Not a King or a Queen! Nothing but that older title, dear thru all time, born "at life's drifted font," sacred in all of the estimates of life, death, and resurrection; secure in eternal edict of Love and its Laws—"Father"; "Mother"; "Sister"; "Brother"; "Grannie." By comparison, how small all others seem! By comparison, how mighty is Love!

ON "CONFESSIONS OF A SMOKER"



FIRMLY believe that the man who smokes deserves to be punished for it. Many of them agree with me and are willing to abide by the issue. Most of them have been punished some. The very learning to smoke carries its qualms. I remember that when I set out to accomplish the education in tobacco, I was out in a sail-boat on a glassy, long-rolling sea, connected to the business end of a black manila cheroot. Roll on, thou dark blue ocean, roll—with accent on the "dark blue." And yet, dear reader, may I confess, I still have the awful habit of smoking, which I consider the most pernicious and which I advise all others to avoid. Why I did not lose the habit at that time and place, I never could understand—I lost so much.

A correspondent writes me this week that the man who smokes should by all of the biblical interpretations of punishment be landed in hell. I agree with him. I cannot fancy people smoking—or wanting to smoke—in heaven. But that is not so much a question with me (for if a man had the desire to smoke in heaven, and as he has won the right to happiness, there would be smoking-rooms somewhere) as is the belief that

a person here should try to please others and if those who do not smoke, feel about it as they say, why! we should try to oblige them; same as we do people playing golf. It makes me mad to see people wearing out their lives and strength, playing golf when they might be sawing wood. I don't do it—why should others? It annoys me. They put their clubs on my toes in the trolley cars. They go about with a superior look on their faces. Must I submit tamely? Never! I want golf playing abolished by law!

It has been decided also that the lowest sin of all smoking is the cigarette. I smoke cigarettes! I quit smoking cigars, for my health. It was being undermined by cigars. The pipe is also a rudimentary sin. I selected the cigarette as the least harmful—the tapering off to the final release from the dread bondage. I am still convinced that it is all that I hoped it to be; and yet I find that I am in bad company. I am gradually conquering it by getting onto simpler brands. I began with the twenty cent kind and am now down to the eight cent brand and hope by degrees to get down to the five cent; the three cent; the two cent, and thus taper off to nothing. I hope that a law may intervene to make cigarettes either cheaper or dearer—it does not matter much which.

I am warning boys against the first cigarette. It is sure to make you trouble. There is something so seductive and seditious about it that it cannot be expressed in words. One cigarette will lead to another and then to another, and by and by, some night you will grow up (unless you die) and will go staggering home to your wife, mother and children, full of Camels, Meccas, Fatimas and Pall Malls, blear-eyed, incoherent, the mere semblance of a human being, a shame to your household and especially to your little children.

This is no fancy picture. There is no more horrible fate than the man so lowly inclined. And it may all

He stopped by omitting the first cigarette—all so easy. Think of the time and money you will save by going without. Think of the bondage of the smoker! He is tied for life to a box of matches and a cigarette, a pipe or a cigar. Men have wasted more time scratching matches this very day, than would build a merchant vessel. Every day, men and women—for women also are smoking—put more time into smoking than would raise a million bushels of wheat. The figures are not mine!

Charles Lamb wrote the most pathetic tale of his bondage to the pipe. He was a melancholy man, who smoked incessantly. I do not. I smoke only now and then—mostly now. Lamb had the good habit of feeling his sin. He was a philosopher on the subject. I am only a warrior. I am "agin" it in theory and for in personal practice. I do not like to have others smoke and not myself smoke. And yet I would like to see the day come when nobody smoked, for then I am sure I would not care to do it alone.

You may say that this is a lamentable confession. I admit it. All writers come to the confessional now and then. I assume that you, dear reader, will be willing to come across with confessions equally personal as to your pet sins. I am willing, nay eager, to be punished! Are you? I ask no leniency. I confess and abjure and yet smoke on. I am punished daily. I am punished nightly. I am punished in futurity. I am of the vast army—going to quit. I am waiting, waiting for sentence, of the high Court! And yet I do feel that when the Law of the Statutes or the Law of Habit or the Law of Righteousness does intervene between the smoker and his sins, between the pensive smoke wreath that makes his dreams all come true and the cold realization of a smokeless after-supper time with no book and pipe, no cigarette and typewriter between him and the cold outer world, some compensa-

tion ought to be made him. He should have an extra halo on his brow; or a purple stripe on his harp, or a victory-badge on his little cloud-aeroplane to show "over there" that he was a hero over here.

ON "DOWN AND NOT OUT"



EVER lie flat on your back and think it over! It is good for you, whether you lie under your automobile or out on a grassy hill-top under the skies.

It gets the blood out of your head; it distributes the lymph more evenly; it gives you enlarged vision; it takes the conceit out of you, especially if it be under the automobile, referred to. And if something or someone happens to put you flat on your back—oh! the good it does you! It teaches you what your weaknesses are; develops just where the crick in your anatomy is located; teaches you to be humble. And you jump up ready to make a new start and a better one than ever before.

Down! But not out! That's the position I am talking about. You have been going along pretty well upright on your feet. Something floors you. Pride goeth down with you, as saith the Scripture. You are flat on your back and taking the count. In that brief time you have leisure, untold, for thinking over when, how and where you received the punch that put you to the mat. You can, recumbently, size up the individual whose feet you perceive to be finally on a level with his head. What a chance to look the thing that floored you fair in the face. If it be extravagance, you see its foolish features. If it be dissipation, you feel its hot breath, disgustingly. If it be lust, you hear its ribald laughter. If it be negligence, you see its slothful habit. If it be sin, you turn away from

its loathsome face. Never before did you see just what you were fighting. Now, at last, you see it as it really is. Help me up! Give me a hand. I know the chap that gave me the punch. He is weaker than I am. I know, now, where to strike him and strike to win. I'm none the worse for having been flat on my back, but rather, am I better—having been far from perfect, hitherto.

And another thing as you lie flat on your back, looking up, you may see thru the azure into skies beyond the blue. Doubtful if you ever looked at the sky much, anyway, when you were pursuing the pleasures of the cabaret—and elsewhere. Did you know the sky is very peaceful and very large and very old and very likely to outlast you and your fancies? Did you know that it hath many stars at night that seem to indicate that there are infinite fires beyond the Pleiades and infinite heavens in the space of worlds? Did you know that God gave it the color of the eyes of an innocent baby—blue, yea, very blue, as tho filled with celestial light. And by day what beats upon your face? What but sunshine, and what is better than that? Perhaps you may see far enough into the sky to catch some glimpse of a certain power in the heavens, not made of man but eternal—up there. Perhaps it will give you a lift.

So! Get up! Go to it. You are not licked. Fact is you are a lot stronger than before you went to earth. Nobody can whip you, except yourself. The world is full of folks who would help you, if you needed it, but you don't. If you were any man before you went down, you are a better man now. Here is your motto: "Look up, not down; look forward, not back; lend a hand." When you are standing up again with the dawn of the new day in your face, pass on the word.

And perhaps, in the newer life you will like to go out on the hills and lie flat on your back just for fun, and for the sake of the analogies. You will see a lot—birds in the tree, clouds in the skies, sun in the heavens, hope in the future. And all you will ask for is someone to brush off your back with the promise to your soul that henceforth it shall ever be kept clean.

ON "THE ETERNAL SEARCH"



AFCADIO HEARN tells us that in the house of any old Japanese family, the guest is likely to be shown some of the heirlooms. "A pretty little box, perhaps, will be set before you. Opening it, you will see only a beautiful silk bag, closed with a silk running-cord decked with tiny tassels. You open the bag and see within it another bag of a different quality of silk, but very fine. Open that, and lo! a third, which contains a fourth, which contains a fifth, which contains a sixth, which contains a seventh, which contains the strongest, hardest vessel of Chinese clay that you ever beheld. Yet it is not only curious but also precious; it may be more than a thousand years old."

Historical, natural science and the study of life in its ultimate forces have to do with similar unwrapping. One removes one wrapper and then another. We try to count the threads, we try to analyze the envelopes, we try to find the secret that they contain. And when we do find it, we ask science what it is. She can only say, "I do not know." It is so old, so wonderful, that science can give no name to it.

This is a very good illustration of the hopelessness of human effort to understand God. The most learned theses end at something which man cannot name. He makes a big show of removing the envelopes; he

displays his treasure. He cannot give you any further light.

So, one may be pardoned for getting weary of human effort to solve life all at once, by writing a book about it. There is a story of a man who died and came back to earth. He had spent his life on a monumental work, intended to explain the mystery of this world and the next. He was permitted to wander thru all of the libraries where he expected to find his book. The only work of his that he found in any library was a little, thin volume of casual essays on his own personal experience. His solution had passed into oblivion; his experience still lived.

Perhaps the solution of life and its problems, its source and its destiny, may lie in the collection of scattered experiences, as the final pattern of the rug is in the collected threads. Science cannot answer a single question of elemental sort. It deals in processes but not in the "why" of one of them. It unfolds the element but cannot name it. It is lost in wonder in two worlds—the great spaces and the small. It makes a great parade of knowledge, but while it knows that the compass points north and that the seed germinates in ground—it has no name for the force that thus compels them.

Everything that you study, therefore, tends to make you more firmly a believer in something you cannot name. "There are two books whence I collect my divinity," wrote Sir Thomas Browne, hundreds and hundreds of years ago, in that most wonderful of books "*Religio Medici*." "Besides that one written of God, there is another of his servant Nature, that universal and public manuscript that lies expanded before the eyes of all. Those who never saw Him in the one have discovered Him in the other." And Bacon said: "This I dare affirm in knowledge of Nature, that a little natural philosophy and the first entrance

into it doth dispose a man to atheism, but, on the other side, much natural philosophy and wading deep into it, will bring about men's minds to religion."

Thus, will you please bear with me for sermonizing in this day when religion of some kind is so sorely needed. Will you bear in mind that you may go as far as you like and, ever and ever farther on in the little box of your life, are things that contain things. And that when you go as far as you can—there is at last something you cannot name. Is it the eternal? Is it the everlasting, Almighty God? Men of science, thru all ages, have sought to discover him. It is the quest of all study. And is it not true, after all, that the Kingdom of God cometh not by observation—but rather by faith and at the mother's knee?

ON "GENTLENESS AS A PRACTICE"



OUR OLD friend, Marcus Aurelius, says: "Consider that gentleness is invincible, provided it is of the right stamp, without anything of hypocrisy or malice. This is the way to disarm the most insolent, if you continue kind and unmoved under ill-usage; if you strike in with the right opportunity for advice; if, when he is trying to do you an ill turn, you endeavor to recover his understanding and retrieve his temper by such language as this, 'I shall not be injured, you are only injuring yourself.' Show him that bees never sting their own kind."

I can hear you say that this does not apply to war-times. And that is true! Moralities are swept away in times of war and that is one of the worst things about war. What ethical ruin it entails! What damage it may do to forgiving natures; what loss of moral susceptibilities; what devastation of gentleness!

But, normally, this is good teaching and it is interesting to note what the pagan philosopher was thinking, only a few years after the Nazarene had finished teaching that nobler doctrine of brotherly love, gentleness, and altruism that are at the foundation of the moral as well as the spiritual code of Christianity. It seems as tho something of the spirit that emanated from the martyrs that Marcus Aurelius himself helped to make by his persecution of Christians, had gone from the prison to the palace. But Marcus Aurelius persecuted Christians, chiefly because of politics and because some of the Christians, after Christ had gone on Home and they had lost His example, were very noisy and obstreperous persons and really encouraged persecution. Surely, they did not cultivate gentleness—all of them.

There is no passage in all scripture that has been more misinterpreted than that suggestive of turning the other cheek. Sects have been formed on this passage of scripture. They have usually demonstrated one thing. It is this: You cannot reason with insane people. Hang to your ethics as long as possible. Act mildly to the limit. Be gentle to the sane. Be kind to the insane. Summon all of your arguments, but when the tiger flies at your throat, either fight or run. And if he is a man-eating tiger, your duty as an exemplar of gentleness, is to fight. For tigers and Germans need to be restrained. Your first duty in gentleness is to the unprotected—to society in general.

But there are lots of people who seem to think that when they are required to admonish, to advise or to differ with others, they must bellow all over the remises. They seem to think that they must bluster, wear, assume authority and announce "I am the boss." Nothing doing! No need whatever. The English officer often goes into battle with a light walking stick in his hand. He does not need anything more

for his "authority." So, too, you need not splutter and growl and spit like a bob-cat whenever you approach a neighbor or an employee or an under-clerk in your department, with a reproval. The duty is not merely passive, therefore, as far as the philosophy of Marcus Aurelius is concerned. You are not merely to be gentle in reply to ungentleness, but also you should not start things in the first place. Keep your ethical shirt on. Keep the caloric from under your collar. Don't be a Hun; be a Honey.

Yes! The old Pagan was right. Remember how unconcernedly Socrates wore his old sheepskin when his scolding wife, Xanthippe, stole his only coat and ran out of the house with it. Xanthippe did it to see Socrates get mad. Socrates declined to be angry. Xanthippe never tried it again. The soft answer does indeed turn away wrath. Try it. And not only try that but also try to be no partner in wrath. Let God alone indulge in Wrath—against them that wilfully do wrong in His sight. Your part is to keep out of it, altogether.

ON "SOME STOIC PHILOSOPHY"



RECKON the days in which you have not been angry. I used to be angry every day; now every other day; then every third and fourth day; and if you miss it so long as thirty days, offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God.

Epictetus wrote this, first, 1860 years ago. He was a Stoic slave to a Roman tyrant. He probably knew a thousand times more than his master and probably kept his temper better.

If you need advice on general rules of conduct, there is no better than this. The man who becomes angry makes a mistake. He gives away, immediately,

all the advantages he originally possessed. Suppose him to have been a man of good judgment in business. If he gets angry, he loses his business judgment. He no longer sees things clearly. His brain is stirred; his blood is racing; his mind is confused; he makes mistakes. Suppose him to have been a kindly man. If he is angry, he is apt to be unkind, nay, even brutal. Suppose him to have been a just man. He loses his sense of justice. Suppose him to have been a careful man. He loses his sense of care and exposes himself to dangers unwittingly. In short, the angry man is partially insane and the man who is not angry can always get the better of him, on equal terms, because he has about himself a degree of judgment and prudence and so-called "wits" that give him a great advantage.

Here is an example. In prize-fighting, it is the effort of the one fighter to get the other angry. When he can do this so that the angry man actually "sees red," so to speak, then he has a distinct advantage over his unbalanced adversary. The wily fighter refuses to accept the bait. So, too, should you in business or in daily life. Every time you get angry, you average to make a fool of yourself; your associates comment upon it; you are set down as a distinct failure in that respect. It is commented upon as a weakness. "Too bad," says the layman of the otherwise good lawyer, "he would be fine counsel in court if he didn't lose his temper." Joseph H. Choate won many cases against one of the greatest attorneys in the United States by playing with the man's temper. Mr. Choate was always affable. Nobody could get him angry. Mr. Choate could simulate anger; never indulging in it. If I were a lawyer, I would study *pictetus*. Being a newspaper man, I don't have to. We are public servants and not permitted to get angry.

Once a young couple were married. I was there and saw it. After the knot was tied and they came before the bride's father, a man of wisdom and equanimity, he gave them this advice:—

"I cannot hope, my daughter, that you will go thru your married life without ever getting angry at your husband. I cannot hope, my son, that you will go thru life without ever getting angry at my daughter. But for the love of home and happiness, never—never—never—both get mad at the same time."

This is scientific. Two mad men leave no wise counsel on the premises. A mad man and a mad woman are without restraint. So in this household, of which I speak, it has been the rule that when one gets angry the other keeps cool and goes to laughing. It's a good thing for young couples to remember. By and by, it leads to the philosophy of Epictetus.

So, I say that it is money in your pocket not to get mad. More men have been ruined by law suits engendered by anger, than in any other one way. When you get mad you give away your trenches, your ammunition, your reserves and your leadership. The enemy then gets you.

ON "GOOD MAJORS AND BAD"



PEOPLE whom office has never compelled to assume authority over others have missed a valuable lesson in social sympathy. To have been a "Major" or a "Colonel" in war is either to make a man or to mar him. Authority goes either to the head or to the heart. Sometimes it makes a whistle out of a pig's tail and sometimes it makes a pig's tail out of a whistle. Some of the greatest men in the land got

their training as officers in the Civil War, and some of the failures of life were developed in the same way.

One day after the Civil War, a man who was riding thru the farming districts of the Middle West stopped by the wayside to talk with a farmer. Several men were working in the field and the traveler was interested to learn that most of them had been soldiers in the war and that among them were a number who had been officers.

"That man over there," said the farmer, "happens to have been a private, but the man next to him was a corporal; that chap over there was a major and over in the next field is a man who was a colonel."

"Indeed," said the traveler, "what kind of workmen are they?"

"Well," said the farmer, "the private is a first-class man and the corporal is a pretty good worker."

"Yes," said the traveler, "how about the major?"

"He's about so-so."

"But the colonel?" persisted the traveler.

"Well," said the farmer, "I ain't a-goin' to say a word against any man that fit in the war to save the Union, but I notify you right here and now, I ain't goin' to hire no brigadier generals."

We had a speech at the Bowdoin College Alumni Association the other evening here in Lewiston by an officer of the late war about officers and service. He said that he never would advocate a form of compulsory military service that forced a boy to have his spirit broken by a martinet. The glory of the American soldier was that he had his self-respect still with him, not broken to the Kaiser's goose-step and not broken on the wheel of military discipline that intended to reduce all men to a dead level of blind and unreasoning automata. He said that there were two kinds of officers—we had them both. One would call his men before him and say: "I am your superior officer be-

cause I happen to be such. I claim no superiority as a man or a citizen. I recognize you as fellow-Americans entitled to my best consideration and care. I am, however, your commanding officer, and as such, no matter how it has come about, I am entitled to your obedience. The discipline of the service demands it; your country is entitled to it and I shall see that the service gets it. We are working together for the same end."

There was another kind of officer who said nothing of the kind and showed that he believed that the men were beneath the consideration of his mightiness. He treated men as slaves and with the fixed determination to exact the last measure of humility from them. It was his pleasure to break their wills; drive them to tasks beyond their strength; mete out punishments for the sake of showing his power and exact the full measure of etiquette toward his almightiness. Men so subjected often come out of the army damaged in Americanism—which is soul and body of life.

The army does not differ much, after all, from business. The martinet in the office is responsible for most of the un-Americanism in the shop. And it is odd that most of these men have sprung themselves from the shop. Given authority and forging ahead they have fought their way to the top literally over the bodies of others, and established there, have forgotten that they once were shopmen. They walk the quarterdeck of the business craft much as the old-fashioned "bucko" mates and captains of the old clipper ships that once went wind-jamming around the Horn, ruling with a curse and a blow as prelude to the command.

But—the day is past, long past, we hope. It can't be done any more. Some must always lead; do the thinking; stand at the wheel and steer; navigate the ship; fight the corps; but he need not

be drunk with his power. Nor need the soldier or the workman emulate the tyrant. The mutineer and the slacker is as bad as the bad-boss. Cheerful commands, cheerful compliance, comradeship, mutual responsibility, mutual advance—these are the solvents of all future questions. You may think that this is preaching. If you do, ask someone who has been in the service and who has done his own thinking. We need good officers, good heads of business, bigger ideals, better faith both ways and all around.

ON "WHEN I AM TIRED"



ARE we ever really tired, except it be both of the body and the mind. Tired souls are not those who have merely toiled; for the muscles soon relax, the functions restore themselves and again the body finds itself like the Ford car, ready for another cranking with a full tank of gasoline and the road stretching before it full of wonders and with strange adventure awaiting it.

No—we are not "tired out" except it begin with the mind and the nerve-force. We may sit a brief hour before the fire and watch it leaping up its ladder to the open sky and be refreshed, but if the mind be disturbed and the soul sick, then all of the fire and all of the arm-chair will avail but little. "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth," said Rebekah to Isaac. The mother was the first in history to proclaim the state of her mind—tired out with worry and watching lest her son Jacob take a wife out of the daughters of Canaan.

I am impressed with the error of them that work with the hands and the bodies alone. How little they know of the utter weariness of the other half of the world—the desk-ridden toiler who sits hour by hour

over the problem of the day. How little they appreciate how willingly he would exchange the ceaseless round of figures and papers, the struggling with problems of research and accomplishment, the demands of the cashier's office and the bank, for the strenuous toil over the machine, the "going over the top" against obstacles in the material world, the building of things in the open, the war against earth, water, tides of the sea, the forests and all things primeval. That flayed-out feeling of brain-fag! That never-ending gnawing at the heart-strings, that sense of futility as one searches his soul and his mind for inspiration to the betterment of mankind, the drain on the preacher, the teacher, the writer, the manager of a business. It is all folly! This idea of labor. As I have said a dozen times, labor is not "work;" labor is rough-going in work. The ship labors in the sea; the engine labors at its task; but when silently moving on, it "works" well. We are born in "labor." God, alone, works.

Let it be said, therefore, that never can there be any reorganization of toilers, that does not include the brain-workers and give them a share in the production of the world. No Soviet rule (surely coming in no distant day, I make this a prophecy, tho not by revolution but in simplified and useful form of liberalism) can be effective that rules out the worker in the office, at the typewriter, over the inventor's or the editor's desk. These know quite well what it means to be tired—tired of the weariness that bids sleep fly away; that rumples the pillow; that makes the feet feel like lead and the head too tired to lift. No rest assuages the weariness and no balm but out-of-doors and change can bring relief. These men cannot be counted out of the class of "laborers." "Much study is a weariness to the flesh," saith the preacher.

We also have what we call a "good tired." We have it when we come back from fishing a long, happy

day on a Maine lake, with the blue above, the fish striking with hunger, the wind sweet on our faces, the mountains clear in the distance. We have it after we have worked happily with the body all day long and accomplished things. We have it when we have come back from a long tramp in the autumn woods and see the lights of the camp welcoming our tired feet to a sweet rest by the camp-fire. But we do not have it, save the mind has been employed in happy things. We do not have it when the body rises again and again to toil with no enjoyment. We do not want these tired folk. We do not want the world run, so that men and women shall be tired and unhappy. The best work is from the man who sings at the machine or smilingly takes up his morning duty at his desk. Life is never going to get ahead making other people unhappy. We shall go mad, unless we have relief for the mind from fear of want and from the drive of life urging us on to the grave. These are the things in which tolerance of the workers must come to the rescue of the situation. We must have the mind cared for, first; the drag upon the nerve-force stopped; the never-ending draft upon resources ended, so far as is possible.

The old-fashioned father used to regulate the boy's work. If the lad said, "Father, the fish are biting well today," the father said, "You keep right on working, sonny, and they won't bite you." Time may be when a paternal government will see to it that everyone produces something—no idlers, no drones and no over-worked. Then "labor" will not quit whenever it gets ten dollars ahead and go on a pleasure trip, but all alike be busy and happy. I wonder!

ON "SEARCHING YOUR NEIGHBOR'S PAST"



IF YOU have known men at all you have known the man who is good because he was born that way and the man who is good because he has fought it out and decided that it is better, that way.]

How likely we are to search the past of people to find out if they have ever been bad. How prone are we to say that such and such a good man has not so much to the credit as has his neighbor who never has fallen because he never was tempted. We run over the records of men's lives with a searching finger and stop at all the black spots; as tho all the white pages and all the tender deeds and all the charities they have done afterwards, had no power to blot a line.

And yet—in God's word, we find that this is not the right way. And in all philosophy and in all fair-play and in all practical common-sense we know that it is not the right way. How can it be right? Here are two men—one born under every adverse influence, without parentage that could foster his better nature; cast out on the world when it was a battle to live; made to fight and conscious that it was his wits against the world, or starvation was the alternative. And here is the other, gently reared, no need to worry for money or friends. And if both are equally honest; equally fair; equally kind to his neighbors; equally respectable and decent at the age of maturity, which of the two deserves the greater praise? It is a shame—the way the world refuses to forget the evil that men have done while yet they live and are repentant. It is a shame that the Past rises to confront so many men and women who have sinned and repented and reformed and found the better way. Instead of being

reviled, they should be given medals of honor, the cross of victors, the assurance that the world gives to them that fight good fights, and win.

And it is true in all philosophy and in all times. I turn to the thumb-worn pages of my Montaigne who says, "I fancy virtue to be something else than the mere propensity to goodness; something more noble than good-nature, that we are born into the world withal. Well-disposed and well-descended souls pursue, indeed, the same methods and represent the same face that virtue itself does, but the word virtue imports, I know not what more great and active than merely for a man to suffer himself, by a happy disposition to be gently and happily drawn to the rule of reason. He who by a natural sweetness and facility should despise injuries received, would doubtless do a very laudable thing; but he who, provoked and nettled to the quick by an offense, should fortify himself with the arms of reason and after a great conflict master his passion, would doubtless do a great deal more. The first would do well; the latter virtuously."

Thus, be it my message, today, to say what everyone knows and so few remember—that no man who has never been tempted knows how strong he really is; and no man who has been tempted and fallen is beyond temptation; and the man who is redeemed beyond danger but is stronger for the experience, is the nearer to being master of his soul. And this is no plea for yielding to temptation, but a warning to them who will make no excuses for the falling. It is far better to conquer in the first place; but it is better to conquer in the second or third place than not at all, and victory makes us stronger, by the sense of power in itself.

There is no meaner soul than the untried, scorning the unredeemed. I should be afraid of myself, had I no charity. I should be afraid of my neighbors, had

they no pity. For virtue is an active, not a passive attribute. It grows not by lying dormant but by exercise. It becomes strong in temptation and weak in the cloister. Beware, therefore, how you search the past of men and women. Rather consider them as they are, for goodness and virtue are constant working forces to be prized for what they may do—not for what they have done.

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